

# *Hearst's International* *combined with* **Cosmopolitan**

*July*

*Cents*

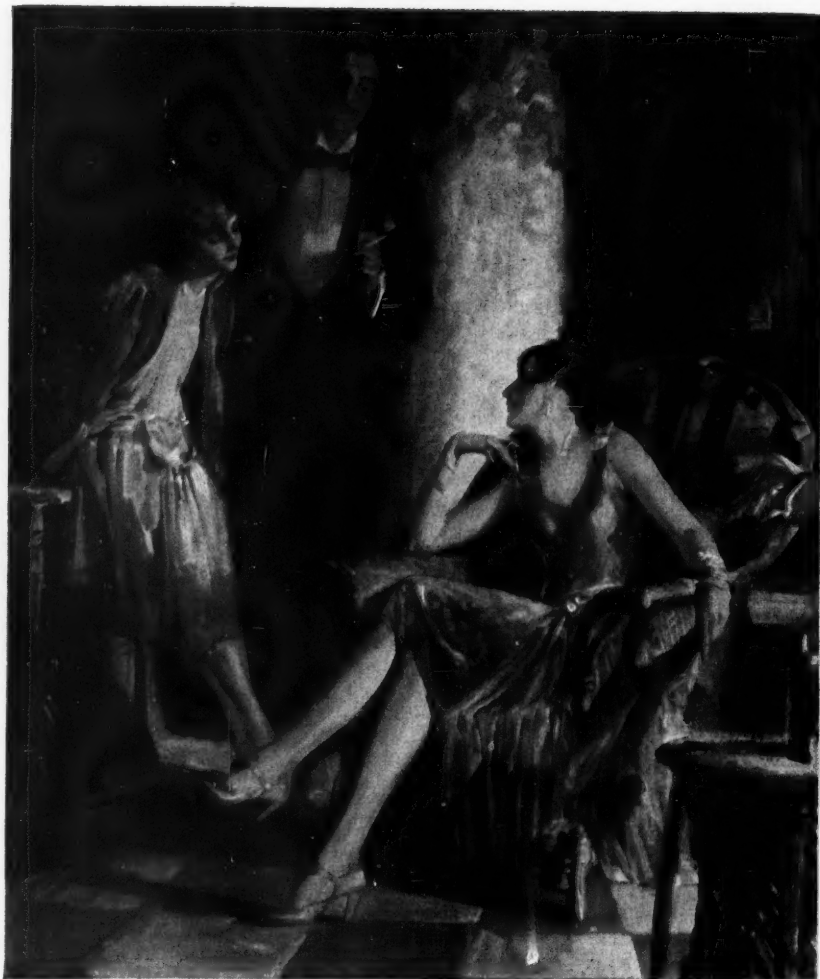
*A*  
*New Romance by*  
**E. BARRINGTON**  
*A Brilliant Story by*  
**EDNA FERBER**



### Thirty-one Paris Shades

The illustration suggests two smart effects in the new shades. With the dress at the left might be worn either Moonlight or Day-break, two exquisitely light shades.

With the gown at the right Atmosphere, Blush, or Champagne, would be very smart and correct.



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## On These 5 Things Depends the Style Correctness of Your Hosiery

Not one, says fashion, can be overlooked. Now see how Holeproof safeguards smartness by unique fashion features millions know.

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- sheer chiffons must be superlatively clear.
- only the colors new in Paris, bright and non-fading.
- no shadow rings, no streaks.
- no loose threads inside.
- free from style-destroying flaws.

## Holeproof Hosiery

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MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN  
HOLEPROOF HOSIERY COMPANY  
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LONDON, ONT.

IN ordinary hosiery are several faults Paris will not excuse. Often they lie hidden until you put hosiery on.

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general  
wahr

Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan for July, 1926

1



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The New  
Orthophonic

# Victrola

VICTOR TALKING MACHINE COMPANY



CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY, U. S. A.

# Hearst's INTERNATIONAL Combined with COSMOPOLITAN

VOL. LXXXI NO. 1

for July, 1926



NEXT MONTH

**Ibañez** *Author of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"*  
begins a group of new stories  
*of Life and Love in the  
Haunts of European Society*

## This Month

### 4 Serials

The Necklace of Marie Antoinette  
by **E. Barrington**

*Illustrations by* **Walt Louderback**

Dark Dawn by **Martha Ostenso**

*Illustrations by* **W. Smithson Broadhead**

Wolf's Clothing  
by **Arthur Somers Roche**

*Illustrations by* **John LaGatta**

The Understanding Heart

by **Peter B. Kyne**

*Illustrations by* **Herbert M. Stoops**

### 12 Short Stories

Every Other Thursday by **Edna Ferber**

*Illustrations by* **James Montgomery Flagg**

Once Around the Clock by **Owen Wister**

*Illustrations by* **Forrest C. Crooks**

3 Wise Men of the East Side

by **Irvin S. Cobb**

*Illustrations by* **W. D. Stevens**

God Gave Me 20 Cents

by **Dixie Willson**

*Illustrations by* **C. D. Williams**

A Very Cool Million by **Royal Brown**

*Illustrations by* **Edward Ryan**

Just Married by **Sewell Ford**

*Illustrations by* **J. W. McGurk**

The Great Gamble

by **Kathleen Norris**

*Illustrations by* **Lealie L. Benson**

Out of My House, Girl!

by **Mrs. Wilson Woodrow**

*Illustrations by* **W. E. Heitland**

The Last Nose of Summers

by **H. C. Witwer**

*Illustrations by* **Charles D. Mitchell**

A Harmless Flirt by **Hugh Walpole**

*Illustrations by* **James E. Allen**

A Home-Body by **Ernest Poole**

*Illustration by* **John Richard Flanagan**

Alley Oop! by **Wallace Smith**

*Illustrations by* **the Author**

### 10 Features

What G. B. S. Thought When Drowning

by **Robert Lorraine**

Announcing Their Engagement

by **Charles Dana Gibson**

Marriage by **H. G. Wells**

What Happens in Real Life to Abie's Irish

Rose by **Marcus Eli Ravage**

I Wrote 3000 Songs before My First Hit

by **Harry Von Tilzer**

A Little Scheme of My Own

by **George Ade**

*Illustrations by* **John T. McCutcheon**

I'd Like My Daughter in This Orphan

Asylum by **Rheta Childe Dorr**

In the Garden of Eden

by **Mary Roberts Rinehart**

Those Who Will Try to Be Marion Talleys

by **O. O. McIntyre**

We Hunt in Summer Snows

by **Kermit Roosevelt**

Cover Design by **Harrison Fisher**

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# Hearst's INTERNATIONAL

Combined with

# COSMOPOLITAN

JULY  
1926

## What G.B.S. Thought When He Was Drowning

IT WAS at Llanbedr in North Wales, where the mist-wreathed head of Snowdon presides over the mountains that run down to the sea, near Lloyd George's native Criccieth.

I was spending some weeks of the summer holidays with the Bernard Shaws. Every morning we all walked to a secluded cove and went in swimming.

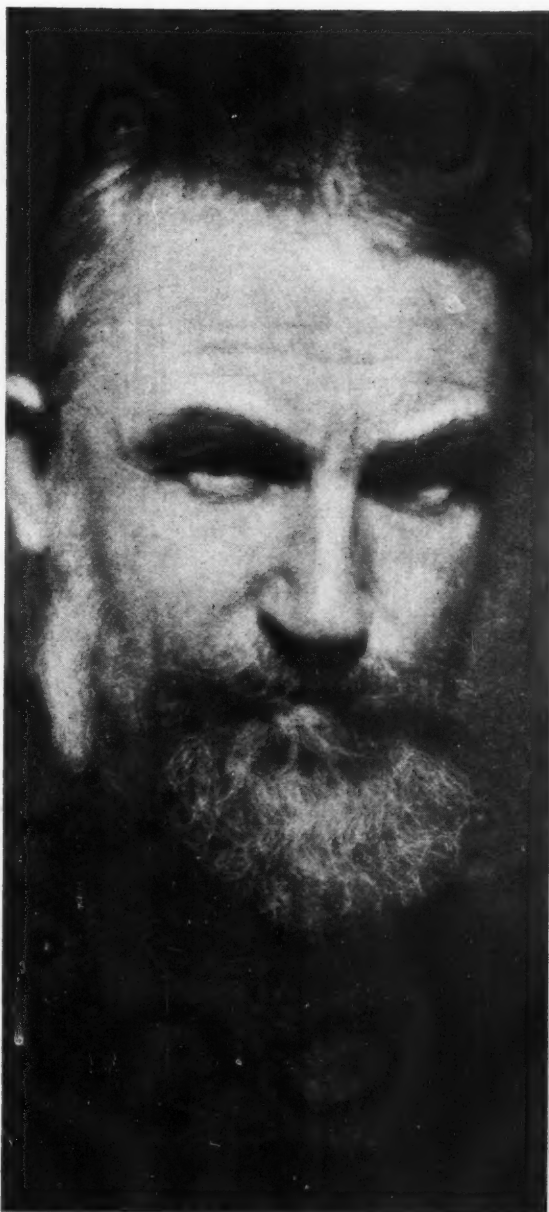
One day after a terrific storm had raged throughout the night leaving a heavy sea with great rough breakers, we thought it better to forego our swim; so Mrs. Shaw remained at home and Shaw and I went walking. He much disliked missing his swim and he looked at the sea and thought it would be fun to see how we would fare in the subsiding turmoil of waters; and I had not the moral-courage to resist the suggestion.

Shaw is a first-rate swimmer, and we gamboled in the breakers for longer than I cared for; but I was reluctant to be the first to suggest returning to the shore. At last, however, we found ourselves farther from the beach than we imagined, and by mutual understanding we turned in-shore and swam for land.

Shortly we found that some current, probably a relict of the storm, was holding us and pressing us backward into the spaces of the great Irish Sea.

I looked at Shaw and wondered if I could rescue him in the event of his strength failing. But the gorgeous notion of saving Shaw's life began to recede from my mind as the realization was forced upon me that only by some stroke of luck would I be able to save my own.

I measured the distance from the shore and decided that I could never make it. The breakers beating on my head were smothering me, and I felt that the sooner it was over the better; so I deliberately stopped swimming and tried to sink and drown. Suddenly I struck my foot against a jagged piece of outstanding



George Bernard Shaw

By  
Robert  
Lorraine

rock. The sharp pain was a stimulant and the momentary sense of something solid under me gave me new heart and strength for a last desperate effort which brought me within my depth. It was not until I felt the solid earth beneath my feet that I was aware that Shaw also had reached safety and was within a few yards of me staggering over the edge of the sea.

We sank on the sand gasping—and for some minutes that was all we could do. When we had breath enough to talk, Shaw said, "That was a narrow shave."

After another interval of deep breathing we asked each other what our feelings were during those moments when we thought we were in the throes of dissolution. For to all intents and purposes we had experienced death by drowning.

"Did you have any lightning visions of the past events of your life, such as the legends say the drowning see?"

Neither of us had.

"Did you think of the future possibilities in the Hamlet vein—the something after death—that undiscovered country?"

"No."

"Did your thoughts turn to God and the salvation of your soul?"

"No."

"Or did you think—dammit, those letters aren't written! And then have a vision like the legendary one but dealing not with the past but with the future, and your unfulfilled intentions in this life, and the dozens of things that you meant to do, like going to Peking and having children, and seeing the South Sea Islands?"

That was more like it. And he had remembered some alterations in his will he had intended making.

To the great Shaw, drowning was after all as unromantic as that.



*By* CHARLES




*Announcing*

# S DANA GIBSON



## *Their Engagement*



*Illustrations by*  
Walt  
Louderback

# The Necklace of

*This is probably the strangest true story in the world. Dumas made it the background for a novel wherein some of the principal characters are fictional and the part played by the Queen wholly imaginary. It needs no decoration from fiction and I have told it as it happened, compressing the time, but merely touching history with imagination and making the true characters speak and live so far as I am able.*

THE most famous diamond necklace of history. Rippling splendors, it lay on its bed of ivory satin, the cool, pearly reflets enhancing the fierce glitter of the magnificent stones. Such a necklace had never been seen hitherto in the world's history—could not have been, for the means of procuring it did not exist. Not before the middle of the eighteenth century could men have so angled and netted the markets of the world as to catch those slippery, radiant fish of jewels. For India aided from her Golconda, and Brazil searched dull earth for the cold, hidden fire whose fame would ring round the world, and ancient caskets of high nobles all over France were

considered in the hope that they would sell. And sell they would and did, more than they would have it known, for wise men guessed that the ends of the earth were coming upon France and there was a mutter of the far distant lion-roar that presaged the French Revolution and the downrush of things as men knew them into chaos.

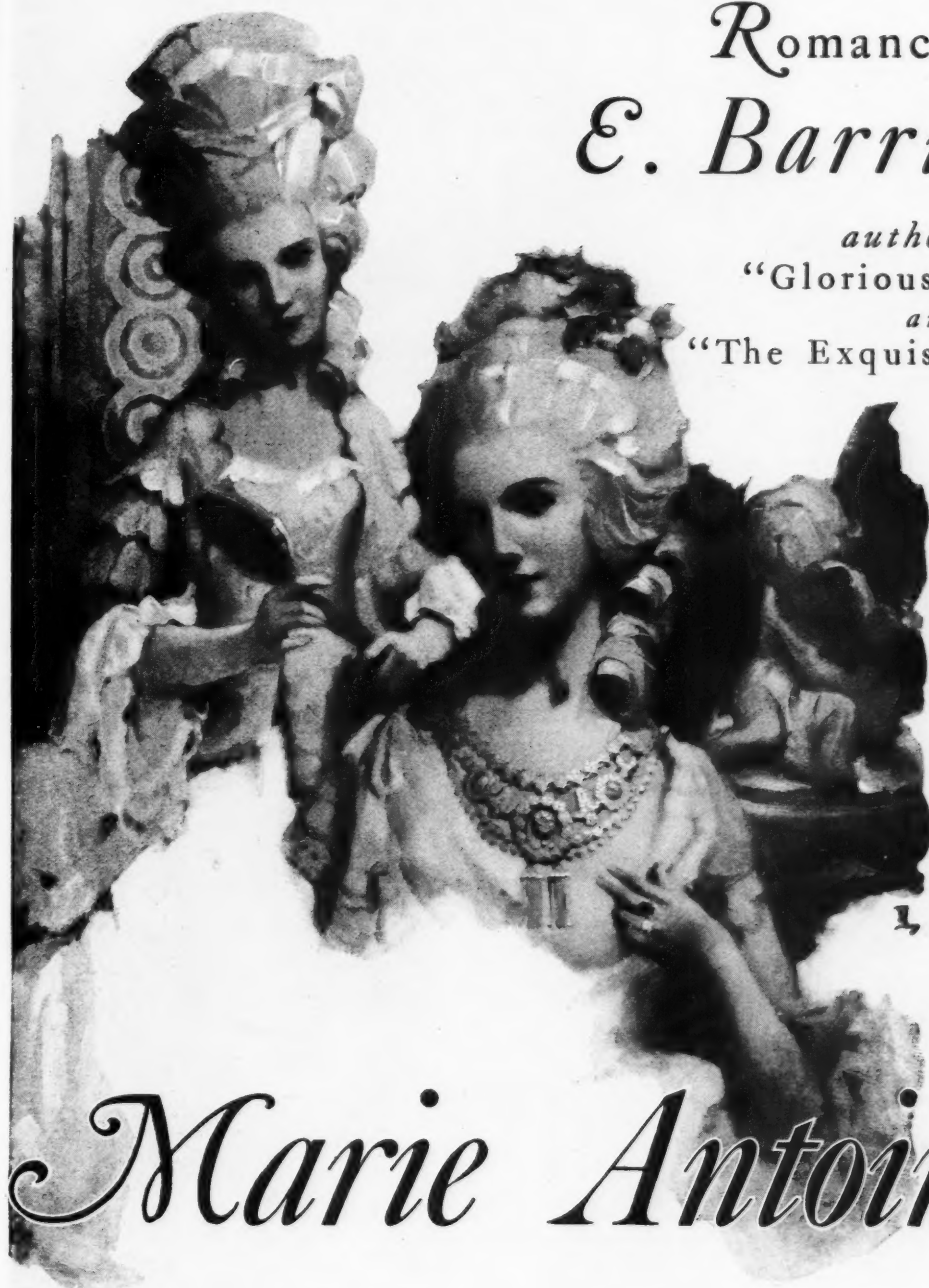
More than one of the greater nobility were already realizing quietly on such property as might be sold without attracting public attention, and purchasing retreats in England and Italy which might come in useful some day—who knows! And, after all is said and done, what so secret and easy to realize on as diamonds?—diamonds which that very accommodating German Jew Bohmer could have imitated in the cleverest possible paste, so that great ladies might still sparkle at Versailles and the Tuileries, possibly themselves unconscious in some cases that their lords had taken thought for the morrow in this quite unpardonable fashion.

Be that as it may, Bohmer the King's Jeweler—proud title indeed with such a queen as the fair Marie Antoinette to



*A New Historical  
Romance by  
E. Barrington*

*author of  
"Glorious Apollo"  
and  
"The Exquisite Perdita"*



*"To permit anyone else to wear the necklace," the Princess de Lamballe said, "would be to acknowledge oneself vanquished." "I feel that too," said the Queen. "But the cost! And times are so bad."*

# *Marie Antoinette*

decorate!—sat in his private room, with his partner Bassange at his elbow, gazing at their completed triumph as it dazzled their eyes with flying sparkles of color unnamable as the outer arches of the rainbow. The spring sunshine played at hide and seek with it, acknowledging a rival, earthy indeed but with all the fire of star and sun concentrated in its glories of living light.

Let it be described and visualized, for those stones made history and unmade—what? Much. As this story shall tell. Here is the portrait by grave historians.

First, about the throat went a chain of seventeen diamonds of purest water the size of filberts. It had taken years to match those stones and when collected only the picked workmen of Amsterdam were permitted to give them the finish art lends to nature, cut and angled and faceted so that from every surface entangled rays flashed lucent. From those were looped in three festoons another chain of splendor-bearing pendants of massed diamonds star and pear-shaped, and as if this were not enough to dazzle, from the back were brought forward two broad threefold rows of diamonds only lesser than the throat circlet, diamonds of

a queen's magnificence in hundreds; and then two diamond ribbons knotting on the bosom fell lower, ending in tasseled diamonds, while at the back of the neck two similar ribbons, but in a sixfold row, fell scattering auroral lights from themselves and their tassels; and thus was the royalest jewel of the world complete in a blinding panoply of light that was fit only for the royalest and most beautiful bosom in all the world.

That certainly was the present opinion of Boehmer and Bassange, but the expression with which they regarded their triumph was not triumphant. Far indeed from it.

"It was the curse of curses that Louis the Fifteenth died before the thing was complete!" said Boehmer moodily. "A man will give his mistress what he won't give his wife, and Madame du Barry had lost her heart to the model in clay. I regarded that money as good as in our pockets. He could refuse her nothing."

"Except constancy! If he had kept away from the ladies of the Parc au Cerfs he would have escaped the smallpox and death, and du Barry would have had the necklace."



**C.** "Everything she does is lovely," declared his own. And what could he deny her?



lared  
her?

*the King. To him, Marie Antoinette was something from a higher world than  
Better if he could have done it sometimes, and affected an austerity he could not feel.*



Boehmer lifted a glittering tassel with a meditative air; his Hebrew descent was very visible in his blond Germanic face, indeed obtruded itself in the heavy brooding look of his people when the hand of the Gentile is heavy on them.

"And yet—laugh at me, my friend, if you will—it would have been a bitter pill to me to see this about the du Barry's plebeian neck. It wants—it demands all there is of the most patrician and imperial to do it justice. You see it?"

"No neck is plebeian with diamonds like this about it and money does not smell whatever hands it comes through. In business is no sentiment. *Mon dieu*, I wish it were about the du Barry's neck at this moment. She is a very pretty woman though as vulgar as a woman of the fish-market. But that suited his late Majesty perfectly well."

Boehmer's large blond face, the very mask of good living and prosperity, bore a slight expression of contempt. His own manners and tastes were courtly. His position admitted him to the Queen's boudoir when she wished to consult him on matters of importance—he had acquired the taste for royalty from his association with its magnificence. Business was certainly business, but it could be combined in his case with delicacy of sentiment unknown to Bassange, who represented the hard utilitarian point of view which reckoned everything in cash. True, when the du Barry ruled France through her old voluptuary of a king, Boehmer was able to see the romance of her position and to think the diamonds not inappropriate to the first sultana to the Most Christian King, but now that the King was dust and the the lady of no consequence whatever, he thought the manner of Bassange ill-timed.

"That episode should now be forgotten," he said, a little stiffly. "Our present beloved monarch does not indulge himself in such distractions, and it is clear that an ornament destined for a du Barry cannot be pleasing to a young Queen of France if the past is insisted upon. Her mother, the Empress, brought her up with the strictest notions in the world."

"Which the bride of fourteen began to shake off as a dog shakes his ears when she got into her adopted country! And besides, diamonds smell no more than money," retorted Bassange with a pinch of snuff. "But let it be forgotten if you will. The main point is that her Majesty should see the necklace, and soon. The matter is frightfully serious for us. The times are not too promising for a toy of this cost, and you should—"

"Toy! Good heavens!" cried Boehmer. To him the necklace was the one splendid salient fact of the universe. He had given years of his life to it, had toiled, plotted and intrigued to collect those jewels, and now—that that coarse Bassange should call it a toy!

Indignation choked him.



"*Par foi* one can eat and sleep without diamonds," crowed the chubby little Bassange. "Better sometimes than one can with them, for that matter. But in any case time is precious. Get permission this very day to see the King at the first chance. The Queen too. Since he fell in love with her eight years after their marriage he refuses her as little as Louis the Fifteenth the du Barry! So they say. But you who move in court circles should know better than I."

"His Majesty is a good husband. He will be sensible that this ornament should be an appanage of the Queen of France and of no other woman living. Well—I will arrange it. By the way—has the Cardinal de Rohan made any purchases for any of his



**C** "Highness, the time is ripe for you to regain the Queen's favor," the Comtesse said to the Cardinal. "Strike now—and success is yours."

little favorites while I was at Meudon?" asked Boehmer. "He spoke of it."

"A pair of earrings set with small diamonds and turquoise for Madame Laffray and, yes—a ring to match. Nothing much. For a man of his wealth he has spent little of late."

"His loss of court favor depresses his Eminence, I fear. That jest he and his familiar made about the Queen's mother ruined him at court!"

"But it was perfectly true!" said Bassange with his inveterate disrespect for royalty. "The Empress Maria Theresa was the hardest, most griping old hypocrite that ever sat upon a throne. That's probably why our Queen runs to the opposite extreme and

is a spendthrift even for a Queen and a beauty."

Boehmer was profoundly irritated. "For the love of heaven, be guarded! Why criticize royalty? You may see by the downfall of the Cardinal, a man of royal blood, rich, handsome, gay, what comes to those who disparage their superiors. He has not been admitted

to court for years!"

Boehmer's raised eyebrows and hands might have illustrated the loss of heaven, so feelingly did he look and speak.

"But I," retorted Bassange, "am not a cardinal, and my heaven is with Madame Bassange in our little cozy retreat with a good dish of *blanquette de veau* before me and a glass of Chambertin beside it, and my chimney-corner after with a lamp and a good book. Courts are not for me. But you, my friend . . . Let us put this dazzler away and be off and make your appointment."

With all the care and ceremony that befitted its glories the

diamond necklace was locked and barred into safety. Bassange had never said a truer word than that those who possessed diamonds slept ill.

It had become a nightmare to Boehmer. Fire, thieves—God knows what, flitted nightly in procession about his bed, and the mere thought of taking the thing to the Tuileries brought out beads of sweat on his forehead. One must do it alone to avoid observation, but—heavens!—if there were a street scuffle, if his vehicle were run down and himself carried unconscious to the hospital! They would strip him—they would find the treasure. Oh that it were in the keeping of the guardian of the Queen's jewels! He hated and worshiped the thing. He assumed his three-cornered hat—his coat and breeches and silk stockings were irreproachable as befitted the King's Jeweler—and with his gold-topped cane under his arm he stepped daintily forth into the sunny street, his large face apparently as untroubled as if he had not had the most splendid (Continued on page 131)

# H. G. Wells'





# Startling Views On Marriage

THE institution of marriage as we know it has a false air of having lasted unimpaired throughout the ages. It has, as a matter of fact, varied enormously, and it continues to vary, in its obligations, its restrictions, its availability, its duration.

People are constantly discussing, "Are you for or against marriage? Would you abolish it?"

We are all for and against marriage and we abolish it piecemeal continually. We vary the implications of the bond by fresh legislation every few years; we have in my lifetime reduced the former headship and proprietorship of the husband to a shadow, robbed him of rights of assault upon his wife, taken away his privilege of not educating his children, and relaxed the conditions of divorce.

The marriage of today is not the marriage of yesterday, and still less is it likely to be the marriage of tomorrow.

When you rule out of consideration all the points upon which marriage varies in the civilized communities today and consider what remains after the stripping, you will find it amounts to very little more than the legal recognition and enforcement of that natural tendency of the human animal to mate and to sustain a joint establishment for the protection of the resultant offspring.

The force of reason is in alliance with the forces of social convenience in narrowing down marriage to a child-protecting bond. Until that is done it is clear that the state will be depriving adults, needlessly, of their legitimate sexual freedom, to the grave demoralization of such laws and police organizations as may be required to enforce these all too intimate restrictions. The community only becomes concerned with sexual affairs when the public health is affected or a child is begotten and born. Then public responsibilities are incurred, obligations must be acknowledged and home life and upbringing insured for the new citizen of the world.

At present legal marriage is more than such a public bond, partly out of regard for the dwindling social necessity of a rule of inheritance and partly because of the impudent intolerance of our intellectually and morally discredited religious organizations.

In every generation now we humiliate and injure scores of thousands of lives under the discrimination of illegitimacy, in deference to the imaginary needs of keeping together estates that our death duties are busily breaking up, and because the endowments of religion are still sufficient to maintain strenuously orthodox persons and priests.

These are things of the old order and the forces of progress thrust them aside, slowly but steadily.

As the illegitimate is equalized with the legitimate son and the proprietorship of the husband and wife attenuated to the privileges of lover and mistress, the world will cease to inquire for a wife's "marriage lines" and marriage signify little more than habitual association.

Already some people are dropping the change of a woman's name at marriage, and that may extend until it is the general practise. When women write or act or paint, it is becoming common. Doctor Marie Stopes is really Mrs. Roe, Viola Tree is really Mrs. Parsons, and there are hundreds of such cases. Hotel proprietors all over the world, and experienced butlers in the best houses, behave as though there were millions.

The time may come when the ministration of the clergyman, the orange-blossoms and the robe of white, the Voice that breathed o'er Eden, the hired carriages and the white favors will be quaint social survivals of backward suburbs and towns. Such a fading-out of marriage from its present stereotyped

rigidity will put no end to mating. The men and women of the wider life and the larger views will still feel our common necessity to go in couples, for longer or shorter periods. But there may be much diversity in the character of their coupling. The stereotyped relations of man and wife and of man and mistress—which latter are at present a sort of left-handed reflection of marriage—will have given place to many variations of association.

In the ampler, easier, less crowded, less ceremonious social life of tomorrow, a life of more adult, more individualized people, the consorts will not always be upon a convention of equality. Perhaps they will rarely be upon terms of equality. As we begin to take off the stays, blinkers, traces, hoods, masks, fetters, gags we have put upon the sexual imaginations of human beings, and examine into the living realities below, we may realize that we have been trying to adapt an immensely various collection of types to one standard bilateral arrangement.

We may find they are not only diverse in temperament but that they go through diverse phases of development, so that

## *This is the First of a Group of Important Discussions of Your and My Problems Today, by the Foremost Thinker of Our Time*

what is reasonable and desirable for a man of five-and-twenty may be cruel nonsense if it is applied to a man of five-and-fifty. Our moral judgments may need to vary not only with temperament but with the stage of development of the individual we judge.

Human growth goes on throughout life; we do not "grow up" and have done with it, as our forefathers supposed.

The Christian marriage, like most marriage institutions in the world, meets the needs of a peasant life with passable success. It happened normally about the early twenties, or a little later

for the man, and it carried the couple on for twenty years, by which time toil and exposure had aged them, their children were growing up and there was little more to be done for them. It is extraordinary how young in years some of the old women and bent ancients about here are. The romantic tradition of the nomad and his descendant, the aristocrat, was even nearer adolescence. One day came love and another death. We know the youthfulness of Shakespearian romance.

But nowadays we live much longer, we do not age so fast, we learn quicker and mature more rapidly, and a new stage opens and widens in life between the thirties and the seventies, for which the institutions, traditions, sentiment and poetry of the past cannot be expected to provide a complete outline. This is the stage, the new adult stage, upon which the coming order will be built and which is being cleared of its encumbrances of childish, youthful and adolescent habits and feelings, and short and narrow views.

Mating and marriage and the rearing of a family must still be a part of this new life, but only a phase of it.

Our ways of living are even more provisional now than our governments. Everybody does this or that today which nobody will do tomorrow. The change in manners and morals, in customs and conventions during the last half-century has been tremendous, but it may seem nothing before the changes of the next half-century. We are living in (Continued on page 162)



Illustrations by  
James Montgomery Flagg

FROM the moment she thrust a swift and practised arm from beneath the bedclothes to choke the seven o'clock alarm, Helmi was suffused with the thought that it was Thursday. Not merely Thursday, but *Thursday*. Not only that; it was *every other Thursday*. And every other Thursday was Helmi's day out.

She lay there, snug, under the welter of gray blankets, savoring the delicious thought. Her mind leaped at one bound over the dull hours that intervened between seven A. M. and two P. M. From two on and on, the day lay before her, sparkling, golden, new-minted, to spend as she liked. She had it planned, down to the ultimate second.

A pioneer April fly buzzed drowsily at her tightly closed bedroom window. Here in America people slept with their windows wide open, but Helmi knew better than that. The night air is poisonous, as anyone can tell you. Helmi never opened her windows until the really hot June nights set in—sometimes not even then. Habit is strong; and there had been no steam-heat in the Finland farmhouse of her girlhood, and Finnish nights are cold.

Next Sunday was Easter. At Easter time, one year ago, she had had no new hat, no new dress, no new coat, no new strapped slippers like the rest of New York. Last Easter she had been thankful just to be here. Lonely and homesick, but thankful. This Easter would be different. This very afternoon would find her in 125th Street East, which is New York's up-town Finland. There she would buy a blue dress and a bright blue silk hat such as Lempi Parta had worn at the Finnish Progressive Society hall last week; and pale tan silk stockings, and strapped slippers.

# By Edna Every Thursday

For more than a year a great slice of her wages had gone to pay back her brother Abel Seppala and her brother's wife Anni for the money they had sent her to pay her passage over—her two passages over. Those terrible two passages, the first unsuccessful, so that she had seen New York's sky-line approach and recede; the second dramatically successful. She could laugh now when she thought of that successful second landing. They had fooled them, all right, that time. It had cost one hundred and twenty-five dollars the first time, and one hundred and fifty to bribe the steamship steward the second time. Helmi had been almost a year and a half paying back that money to Abel and Anni.

This afternoon she would go to Anni's, in Brooklyn, as usual. But not to stay. From there she would take the subway quickly to 125th Street. She had so many things to do. So many lovely things. She ought to start before two, or how could she do all these things that must be done? That must be done today because it would be two weeks before Every Other Thursday came again. Perhaps she would let her off at half past one, or even one, if the work was finished . . .

The sound of water rushing into the tub in the bathroom off Their Bedroom. Mr. Mawson! He had to have his breakfast at twenty minutes to eight, sharp. It was quarter past seven! Helmi leaped out of bed, flung off her sturdy cotton nightgown, dived into the knitted union suit, the faded tan silk stockings with a run down the seam of one—discarded of Miss Zhoolie—the old saten petticoat, the blue gingham work-dress. Into the stuffy little bathroom off her bedroom. A dab at her face, a splash with her hands, a hasty running of the broken comb through her bobbed pale yellow hair (that bob had been the first step in her Americanization). Helmi always combed her hair after she was fully dressed. It was interesting to hear Mrs. James G. Mawson on that subject, among others.

Out to the kitchen. Bang! The coffee-pot. Rattle! The spoon. Slam! The ice-box door. Clash! The silver. Clatter! The china. Whiff-whoof! The swinging door. Three breakfasts to go at three different times, and the front room to be tidied in between.

Mr. Mawson had his breakfast in the dining-room at twenty minutes to eight. James G. Mawson (the Mawson Optical Company) was a silent, grayish, neat man, behind glasses with special lenses. His breakfast never varied. Half a grapefruit or a glass of orange juice. Two four-minute eggs. Two pieces of whole wheat bread, toasted. A cup of coffee. Two lumps of sugar. Plenty of cream. Out of the house at five minutes to eight.

In March he had essayed to diet. Mrs. Mawson had said he was getting paunchy, and decreed but one piece of toast, thinly buttered; black coffee with no sugar; one egg. For two mornings he had obediently sipped his coffee, though with a wry face, and had left half of it, a sable pool of bitterness, in his cup. Mrs. Mawson never breakfasted with him. The third morning he broke an oblong of sugar in half and slipped the piece into his coffee. The fourth he just tinged the blackness with one small splash of cream. The fifth Helmi brought him two pieces of toast. He ate them both. The sixth she prepared two eggs as usual, placed the sugar and cream at his hand and left the room.

# Ferber Other

*A Chapter from  
LIFE  
as vivid as "So Big"*



These men in America! These husbands! Poor spineless things, treated like little boys by their wives and daughters. In Finland it was different. The women were independent, yes, like the men. But the men were not bossed by the women. These two women, they ran him. Do this, do that, go here, go there, I want thus, I want so. He hardly ever rebelled. Sometimes, but not often. Usually he just looked at them in silence, and a little line would come into his forehead. Between Helmi, the Finnish maid servant, and Mr. James G. Mawson of the Mawson Optical Company, there existed an unspoken and unsuspected sympathy and understanding. Helmi spoke rarely. She was an almost inspired cook.

Miss Zhoolie always dashed into the dining-room just before nine in a frantic rush, and gulped her orange juice standing, in hat and coat. Mrs. Mawson's voice would be heard from her bedroom. "Zhoolie, you eat something hot before you go out."

"I can't. I've got a nine o'clock. I'm late now."

"I don't care how late you are . . . Then get up ten minutes earlier . . . Then don't stay out until one . . . If it's only a cup of hot coffee . . ." But Miss Zhoolie had gone to her class at Barnard.

The Mawsons lived in Eighty-sixth Street, west. Those lessons to which Miss Zhoolie dashed each week-day morning were in 116th Street, Helmi knew. Evidently in this country it made no difference if you reached these classes on time or not.

Mrs. Mawson's tray you brought to her bed every morning at nine, after the others had gone. It was quite a hearty breakfast, considering that Mrs. Mawson Wasn't Strong. She could not rise for breakfast because this brought on one of her headaches. She always spoke of these afflictions in the possessive. One of my headaches. It was as though she cherished them.

IT WAS not hard, once you had got the hang of it. A year ago she could never have done it, but Helmi learned quickly. She had had to work much harder than this on the farm in Finland; had worked in the fields, not only from dawn to dark but far into the bright northern summer nights. Still, this was hard in a different way. Here they were always changing things, doing things differently after you had learned to do them in one way. In Finland the work had been set, inevitable. Now the cabbages, now the rye, now the potatoes, now the corn, now the oats. The horses, the cows, the sheep, the pigs. But here you never knew. With Mr. Mawson you knew. But not with Her. And not with Miss Zhoolie. Often, after they had told her to do a thing one way and she had learned it that way, they changed their minds and told her to do it another. But Helmi went ahead and did it in the original way, disregarding them. Mrs. Mawson said she didn't understand her.

"I must say I don't understand that girl. Really, she's a closed book to me. You can't be friendly with her. She just looks at you. Her face is like a joss-house idol. I honestly think she could come in and find us all murdered and weltering in our blood and she wouldn't turn a hair—especially if it happened to be her Thursday."

"Great, clumsy Hunky!"  
Zhoolie thought. "To think that you can actually spoil my day for me—maybe my life!"

The conversation was between Mrs. Mawson and her nineteen-year-old daughter Zhoolie. Zhoolie had been christened Julia, after the departed distaff grandmama. This, in her fourteenth year, she had Latinized to Julie, which she insisted on pronouncing as though it were spelled with a Zh and a double-o. It must even be stated that she frequently even signed herself thus, especially in the tenderer branches of her Barnard educational career.

James G. Mawson spoke up unexpectedly, as he sometimes did when they thought he had not been listening. "Mighty good girl just the same," he said. "Knows her business, and minds it."

"Helmi's a teep," said Zhoolie.

"A what?" inquired James G. Mawson, over the top of his newspaper.

"A teep."

"Spell it."

"T-y-p-e, teep. That's French."

"Well, you," retorted Mr. Mawson, "make me seek. Si-c-k, seek. That's English."

Sometimes Zhoolie was driven to referring to Helmi as that Hunky. This usually when Helmi had succeeded in making an important (to Zhoolie) telephone message more than usually unsolvable. Her thick tongue and unaccustomed ear made a sorry business of these communications. "W'at? . . . Yeh, iss . . . Who? . . . Yeh . . . She ain't here . . . Wait, I write . . ."

Mrs. Mawson, on her return home, or Zhoolie, would find a scrawl to the effect that someone named U-J-B-D-M had telephoned, and had asked her to call up as soon as she got in. Helmi's own telephone communications were as mysterious as they were private, being carried on in a guttural flood of Finnish, to Mrs. Mawson's bafflement. She always had a helpless feeling that she was being talked about.

Helmi would never make a modish-looking maid. Hers was a trim enough figure, in a broad-hipped, ample-bosomed, wide-shouldered peasant sort of way. But you always felt that her neat afternoon uniform of black and white confined her against her





**C.** "I want Helmi to take tomorrow out instead of today, and she won't," said Zhoolie. "Don't

will, and that some day she would rend these garments from her in a furious burst of Nordic freedom. This irked Mrs. Mawson and Zhoolie.

"Still, if you have only one maid, what can you do? Of course"—hastily—"the Woman comes in to clean one day a week, and the Wash-woman. But Zhoolie has so many friends. Half the time Helmi isn't presentable when people come to the door. And her room!" Mrs. Mawson would then gather the subject into a neat bundle and tie it with the sinister generality that they were all alike.

Helmi's bedroom undeniably was not the most exquisitely kept of bowers. Perhaps, after daily scouring, dusting, mopping and wiping the rest of the Mawson apartment, there was a certain wholesome and nicely balanced defiance shown in the slightly musty disorder of her own private chamber. After all, your chef develops a personal indifference toward food; and walking is no treat for a mail-carrier.

Mrs. Mawson had a way of investigating this room on Helmi's Thursday out. This she excused on the ground of housewifeliness. The room was always the same. On the lower shelf of

her table reposed last summer's white shoes. There they had been throughout the winter. On her dresser a little mound of spilled talcum; a torn hair net; photographs of bridal couples in cataleptic attitudes, and family groups as stiff as woodcuts; a Sunday rotogravure picture of a motion-picture actress and an actor. Stuck in the sides of the dresser mirror were colored picture post-cards that caused both Mrs. Mawson and Zhoolie some merriment. These were, they thought, pictures such as a six-year-old child would cherish. Done in crude greens and reds and pinks, they depicted an old man, white-bearded, got up like a Santa Claus in a pine forest; a white-robed princess-looking female floating on a wave, with stars and sunbursts shooting all about her; a brown-bearded man hammering at a forge like the Village Blacksmith. At the top of these pictures was printed the word Kalevala. Underneath, in finer print, unpronounceable words like Wainamoinen and Ilmatar and Joukahainen.

"Some Finn fairy-tale, don't you think?" Zhoolie said. "Poor thing. I'd like to take her up to school for a mental test. Outside her cooking and housework I'll bet she'd make an average of a child of eight."



blame her," said her father maddeningly.

Certainly Mrs. Mawson and Zhoolie never knew that the Kalevala is the national epic of Finland; the "Paradise Lost," the Shakespeare of that northern country; and that its rhythms, well-known to Helmi and studied by her in her girlhood at the excellent Finnish country school, had been borrowed and stolen and copied by many a versifier included in Zhoolie's English course at Barnard. Zhoolie would have been startled if she could have translated the cadences of the thumbed and greasy volume that lay on the table shelf beside Helmi's last summer's shoes.

On his back he bound his quiver,  
And his new bow on his shoulder,  
In his hands his pole grasped firmly,  
On the left shoe glided forward,  
And pushed onward with the right one,  
And he spoke the words which follow . . .

"My goodness, *why* doesn't she open her windows! And look at her lovely bedspread that I took such—*why* do they always sit on the edge of the bed and never on a chair! And just see this bathroom. I am simply going to tell her that she must bathe oftener than— Oh, they're all alike!"

Always capable and energetic in a slap-dash, lunging kind of way, Helmi, on this particular Thursday in April, was a tornado. There loomed ahead of her the regular Thursday routine which, on Every Other Thursday, was a rite. The kitchen linoleum must be made spotless. There was some American superstition about the sink faucets being left shining on Thursdays out. On the other hand, it was understood that lunch—if any—was to be most sketchy on Every Other Thursday; that Mrs. Mawson would go out for this meal if possible. Zhoolie never lunched at home on week-days. Helmi was free to go when her work was finished.

These things had come to be taken for granted, tacitly. There was little conversation between mistress and maid. Helmi practised the verbal economy of her race. She spoke rarely, and then in monosyllables. Yeh, iss . . . I bake a cake wiss nuts . . . What you want for eat? . . . The iceman, the butcher boy, the grocer, the janitor, the service-elevator boy, in person or at the telephone, got short shrift from Helmi in any case. On Thursdays she was curt to the point of insult. Strangely enough—or perhaps not so strangely—this indifference to their advances gave Helmi a certain desirability in their eyes. When occasion presented itself they attempted to woo her in the *patois* of their kind.

"Say, you're a sketch. You hate the men, don't you? I bet the guy gets you'll have a right to wear a umpire's mask, all right. Listen, baby, don't you never go nowheres? How about a movie? Don't you dance or nothing?"

Did she dance? Did she dance! For what else did she live! To what other purpose was Every Other Thursday planned! Ask the girls and boys at the Finnish Progressive Society hall in 126th Street. Especially (alas!) the girls; the girls who swarmed there of a Thursday night with their half-dollar clutched tight in their big capable palms. You went to these dances alone. If you were popular you danced with the boys. Otherwise you danced with the girls. By half past eight the big dance-hall on the top floor was comfortably filled. By half past nine it was crowded. By half past ten it was packed. The heavy-handed band boomed and pounded out the fox-trot, the waltz, the German polka. Did she dance? Did she dance! These American boys were fools.

This Thursday night she would dance in her new blue dress to be purchased on 125th Street. In her new tan silk stockings, and her new strapped slippers. And then perhaps Vaino Djerf would dance with her. Helmi danced very well indeed. She knew that. She had been the best dancer in her district in the old country. She had noted how Vaino watched her as she danced at the hall on Thursday nights.

But her clothes! It was not for such as Vaino to dance with her. Vaino, of all the Finnish chauffeurs, drove the finest car. It was big like a railway locomotive. It had great lamps like barrels, and glittering with silver. Often you saw this gorgeous vehicle outside Progressive Hall where Vaino took his pleasures—his Finnish steam bath, played pool, danced, boxed in the gymnasium. But when Helmi had her new clothes it would be different. He would dance with her then. She would talk to him (not much—but just enough to let him know that her people in Finland were not common farmers; that she had read the Kalevala; had gone to school; could figure; was a superb cook; owed nothing more on her passage money and could save from now on).

There! Mr. Mawson had almost finished his breakfast. Miss Zhoolie's orange juice on ice. A good half-hour in which to start the cleaning. She attacked the living-room with fury. Ash trays. Papers. Plump the cushions. The carpet-sweeper. Dust.

Usually she accomplished all this almost noiselessly. It was understood that Mrs. Mawson must not be disturbed. But this morning she need not be so careful, for Miss Zhoolie's voice, energetic in argument, and Mrs. Mawson's plaintive tones, could be heard in unaccustomed early morning dialog. Zhoolie was in her mother's room, and dressing frenziedly as she talked.

"Well, you can ask her . . . Well, Pete's sake, we do enough for her . . . But I didn't know until last night. Jane asked me if I'd have them tonight instead of Saturday because they're going to Atlantic City on Friday, all of a sudden. And she's been so wonderful to me, and you know what it means on account of Len. Let her go out tomorrow instead of today. My gosh! It isn't as if she really did anything! Goes and squats at her sister's or whatever it is, in Brooklyn, and drinks coffee . . ."

"Sh-sh-sh-sh!" Then Mrs. Mawson's voice, dulcet, plaintive. "Helmi! Helmi, will you come here just a minute?"

Helmi pretended not to hear; made a great to-do with her carpet-sweeper. Wasn't it Every Other Thursday? Did not every minute count? Zhoolie opened her mother's bedroom door, poked her head out, called sharply, but with the edge of the sharpness illy concealed in a false sheath of velvet.

"Helmi, mother wants to speak to you just a minute, please."

HELMI leaned the handle of the carpet-sweeper against the table and came. Mrs. Mawson was in bed. She looked very plain, and showed her age. Helmi, nineteen, wondered how it must feel to be as old as that; felt a stir of sympathy. In spite of the long period of passage-money payment, she had monthly sent money to her mother in Finland. It was well for Mrs. Mawson's peace of mind, and pride, that she could not read Helmi's thoughts behind that flat Finnish face. Miss Zhoolie stood in the background. She was fastening her blouse with absent-minded expertness. Little vibratory electric sparks of suspense seemed to dart out from her to Helmi.

Mrs. Mawson cleared her throat ever so slightly; pursed her mouth into the semblance of a placating smile.

"Helmi, Miss Zhoolie just learned last night that the guests she was expecting for dinner on Saturday night—three, you know—Mr. Mawson and I were going out—there were to be four, with Miss Zhoolie—"

"Oh, mother, do come to the point."

"Miss Zhoolie wants to know—they can't possibly come on Saturday—they're leaving town unexpectedly on Friday"—a sound from Zhoolie—"wants to know if you can't stay in today so that they can come to dinner tonight—she's to let them know this morning—and take Friday out instead. Will you do that?"

"No," said Helmi.

The monosyllable was so flat, so final, so direct that it had the effect of stunning her hearers slightly; they appeared not quite to understand. Mrs. Mawson actually repeated, painstakingly, as though Helmi had not grasped her meaning: "You could have tomorrow, Friday, instead of today. You probably have no plans. And it looks a little like rain anyway today, don't you think?"

"No," said Helmi.

"You mean no, you won't? Or—" Then, at the look on Zhoolie's face: "I'll tell you what, Helmi! You could take this Sunday instead. Easter Sunday. It isn't your Sunday, but you could have it—"

"No," said Helmi.

Zhoolie remained in the background no longer. She stamped her foot. Color suffused her pretty face. "Well, I think you're a mean thing, Helmi! What have you got to do but go and sit at your sister's—"

"Zhoolie!"

"It's true. She hasn't."

Mrs. Mawson fixed her smile again, but not very successfully. It was really only pasted on, and crooked at that. "To tell you the truth, Helmi, one of the young men coming is someone Miss Zhoolie is very—she likes especially, do you see? And that's why she wanted them particularly tonight. This young man . . ."

This young man. Helmi turned and looked at Zhoolie in her soft girlish beige jersey frock, and her silk stockings, and her smart tan strapped slippers. Her young man! Well, let her get him, then. Helmi had the getting of a young man to see to. So they stood staring at each other, these two girls; Helmi nineteen, immovable, inscrutable, implacable; Zhoolie nineteen, lovely, tearful, spoiled, furious. Helmi's thoughts, translated, would have read: "Get your young man if you want him. I have seen your young men and a poor lot they are, too. I would not exchange my Vaino for a half-dozen of them." Zhoolie's flashing eyes and trembling lips meant: "Great clumsy Hunk! To think that you can actually spoil my day for me—maybe my life! Oh, damn! Oh, damn!"

Aloud she said again, "But, Helmi, it isn't as if you really had anything special to do. What do you do on your Thursday out that you couldn't do on Friday!"

What did she do on her Thursday out that she couldn't do on Friday! Within herself Helmi smiled and hugged her golden day to her. The Finnish girls up-town. Lempi Parta. Blue dress. The Finnish steam bath. Swim. Supper. The play at Finnish Hall. The dance. What did she do on Thursday that she couldn't do on Friday! She looked at Zhoolie, unmoved. She looked at Mrs. Mawson, her mistress. Looked at her stubbornly.

"No," said Helmi. Turned, and went back to her work in the living-room; went back with redoubled and more furious energy to make up for precious time lost.

"I don't care!" cried Zhoolie, like a child. "She's a nasty mean thing. What does she do! Nothing! Not a thing. She hasn't the intelligence to plan a holiday. She hasn't a thing to do."

Up the hall came Mr. James G. Mawson on his way to the Mawson Optical Company down-town. He glanced in at the bedroom door. "What's the row?" he asked. "What's the row?"

"Oh, nothing," said Mrs. Mawson wearily. "I can feel one of my headaches coming on."

Zhoolie turned a tear-stained face to her father. "I want Helmi to take tomorrow out instead of today, and she won't."

"Don't blame her," said James G. Mawson maddeningly.

"Oh, you're always like that, father! Abe Lincoln stuff. It's one of your poses. What difference does it make what day she takes out, anyway!"

"Not any difference to you, Julia; might make a lot of difference to her . . . Well . . ." The front door slammed behind him.

"I've heard people say 'cold as a fish,'" observed Mrs. Mawson. "Cold as a Finn, I'd say."

Helmi consumed little enough food as a rule, aside from copious and unlimited cups of coffee and hunks of rye bread. Mrs. Mawson bought rye bread studded with caraway, just for Helmi. In citing Helmi's virtues Mrs. Mawson was wont to include this. "She really doesn't eat a thing, I'll say that for her. I don't know what she lives on. Eating and bathing seem to be two habits that have never got much of a hold on Helmi."

TODAY Helmi ate even less than usual. She swept through the house like a juggernaut—living-room, bedrooms, dining-room, kitchen. By noon she had done the work of three women; had done all the work there was to be done. A cup of coffee taken standing at the kitchen table. By twelve-thirty the smell of burning hair pervaded the Mawson flat. Mrs. Mawson had not yet gone out. She sniffed the air with an expression of extreme distaste. She walked down the hall to the kitchen. Helmi, fully dressed, of course, in her street clothes except for her coat and hat, was heating her curling-iron at the gas-stove.

"Not finished with your work already, are you, Helmi?"

"Yeh."

"Everything?"

"Sure."

"The ice-box?"

"Thursday iss no ice-box. Saturday iss ice-box."

"Oh—well . . ." Mrs. Mawson drifted vaguely away.

Helmi made her final trip with her curling-iron from the gas-stove to her bedroom mirror. It was not yet one o'clock as she sat stolidly in a subway train marked Brooklyn. Seeing her, you would have known her for a foreign-born servant-girl on her Thursday out. High flat planes of cheek-bones; low full breasts; broad shoulders; pale blue eyes; frizzed bobbed hair; a pretty good cloth coat; silk stockings; a velvet hat. Certainly you would never have guessed that golden hours filled with high adventure lay ahead of this lumpy creature; and that an exciting and dramatic year lay behind her.

Helmi Seppala was being slowly digested in the maw of New York. Her passage money had been sent her by her brother, Abel Seppala. She had sailed from Abo. New York reached, she had been turned back at Ellis Island. Her country's quota was already filled. The thing had been overwhelming. Months passed. Again Abel sent money, against the protests of his wife Anni. This time Helmi bribed the steward of the ship, and sailed as one of the stewardesses. One hundred and fifty dollars that had cost. How sick she had been! She was racked now at the thought of it. The boat reached New York. Unforeseen red tape bound Helmi to the ship. The stewardesses were not allowed to land. Frantic, she managed to get word to Abel.

The boat remained five days in New York. On the day it was due to return to Finland, Abel and Anni came on board, ostensibly to bid farewell to a Finnish friend who was going to his home country. Concealed, they carried on board with them American-made clothes—a dress, a coat, shoes, a hat, powder, rouge, eye-glasses. These had been smuggled to Helmi. Feverishly she had shed her uniform, had put on the American clothes, the rouge,





**C**Helmi walked placidly up 125th Street enjoying the sights. A dark young man spoke to her. "Watch your step, Swensky." "Shod op!" retorted Helmi haughtily.

the powder, the eye-glasses. When the call had come for visitors to go ashore, Helmi, with Abel and Anni, had passed down the gang-plank under the very eyes of the chief steward himself—to the dock, to the street, into the amazing spring sunshine of a New York May morning. Spurned as an alien by her step-motherland, she had disguised herself as a native daughter and achieved a home that way.

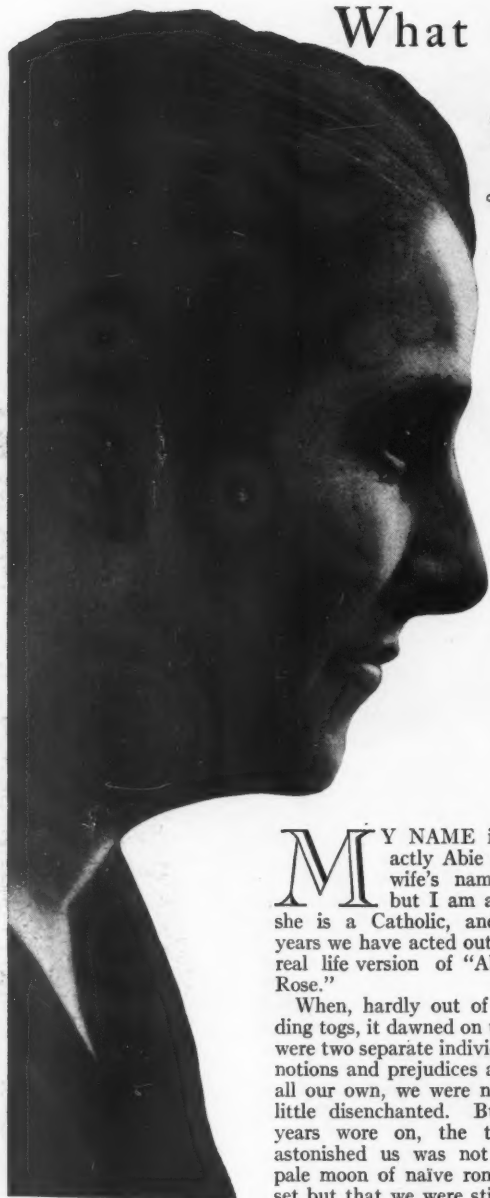
At once she had gone to work. At once she had gone to school. Anni had not been very cordial to this sister of her husband. But she had grudgingly helped the girl, nevertheless. She had got her a "place." The wage was small, for Helmi knew no English and was ignorant of American ways, of New York household usances. But from the first, part of that infinitesimal wage went to pay back the passage money loaned her by Abel and Anni. And from the first she had gone to night-school, three nights a week. Three nights a week, from eight until ten, after her dinner dishes were washed, she attended the night-school class, sitting hunched over a scarred school-desk used by

fourth grade children in the daytime. It was a class in English for both sexes.

Most of the women were servant-girls like herself—Swedish, Finnish, Czech, Latvian, Polish, Hungarian. She had had the look of the Old Country. A big-boned girl, with broad shoulders and great capable hands. She had worn her hair pulled away from her forehead and temples, held with side-combs, and wound at the back in a bun of neat, slippery braids. In her ears she wore little gold hoops. Her hair was straw-colored, with no glint of gold in it; her eyes blue, but not a deep blue. She was not pretty, but there had been about her a certain freshness of coloring and expression. Her hair clung in little damp tendrils at the back of her neck. There was great breadth between her cheek-bones, her shoulders, her hip-bones. Her legs were sturdy, slim and quick. She listened earnestly. They read out of a child's reader. The lesson was, perhaps, a nature study.

"What is a frog, Miss Seppala?"

Miss Seppala would look startled, (Continued on page 190)



C. Mrs. Ravage

# What Happens *in* *REAL* *LIFE* to *Abie's* By Marcus

Mrs. Ravage Was Not  
the Problems She and I Faced

**M**Y NAME is not exactly Abie nor is my wife's name Rose—but I am a Jew and she is a Catholic, and for ten years we have acted out happily a real life version of "Abie's Irish Rose."

When, hardly out of our wedding togs, it dawned on us that we were two separate individuals with notions and prejudices and habits all our own, we were naturally a little disenchanted. But as the years wore on, the thing that astonished us was not that the pale moon of naive romance had set but that we were still walking together hand in hand and passionately desired to keep on. Our sweetheart love had grown sane and

sturdy enough to stand the sober light of day.

We look back over these ten years and marvel at the miracle of it all. Everything considered, our union was about as perilous an enterprise as you could well imagine.

All the odds were against our making a success of it. We differed in race, religion, class and even language. Jeanne is a Frenchwoman of—on her father's side—noble descent. She is convent-bred and grew to womanhood in her own country. My people were Jewish merchants in eastern Europe, and I was educated in the American Middle West. If background, tradition, heredity and early environment count for anything, Jeanne and I were headed for a smash.

There is not much doubt but that my family and friends saw catastrophe in the offing. They wagged their heads sadly over my certain fate, and one outspoken relative, at least, put her fears into words. "Why go hunting for trouble?" she asked. "Aren't there enough girls of your own faith to choose from?" In all probability Jeanne's people took a similar view of the matter.

Well, the poor dears needn't have lost weight over us. My wife and I have struck a good many snags in our short voyage together, some small and others not so small, but none of them that we recall can be laid to the creeds we were brought up in. They may think it odd, but it is the solemn truth that Jeanne

never traced my cussedness to the Scriptures, nor I hers to the Pope of Rome.

All the same, we want to say publicly that we are grateful to our kinsfolk for their skepticism. We have a persistent notion that it was the principal factor—indirect but very effective nevertheless—in saving our boat from the rocks. I mean that half unconsciously we heeded their warnings. And thus from the beginning we made a silent note somewhere in the backs of our heads that our path was likely to be a little more than commonly rough, and that therefore we would have to watch our steps.

**B**UT, after all, perhaps our troubles have not differed very radically from those that come up in homes, let us say, where husband and wife were baptized at the same font and attended the identical Sunday-school class since they were in kindergarten together.

Take, as a starter, my nocturnal habits of work. I came by them in the natural way of literary bachelors. Well, as long as I remained unattached no one found any fault with my system. I was free when all my rivals were grubbing in their offices. I could go to luncheons and teas, to matinées and exhibitions, to picnics and tennis matches and a great variety of other daylight affairs where men companions are at a premium, without in the least interfering with my business. Along about eleven p. m., when Jeanne was perfectly willing to relinquish me and when more normal young men were safely in their beds, I was just nicely keyed up for my labors. At four or five in the morning I turned in and slept till noon. And then the gay round began all over again.

But the moment we went housekeeping together Jeanne's eyes were opened to the seamy side of the arrangement. It was most tiresome. The household was utterly disorganized by my absurd hours. Maids would not stay. There were two breakfasts to serve. My bedroom could not be straightened up in the morning along with the rest of the apartment, because I was asleep. The telephone and door-bells had to be muffled and conversation must be carried on in stage whispers till noon for the same reason. Just when the kitchen had been put in order for the afternoon I came snooping around for a sandwich and a glass of milk to help me survive till dinner-time. I was in the way when she was busy, and at work when civilized Christian couples went to the theater or to call on friends.

In a word, the system which had been perfection itself in courtship was an impossible burden for a wife.

Why, Jeanne wanted to know, couldn't I work like other people and be free for her and our friends at night?

It was a reasonable objection. Therefore I did my utmost to meet it.

For a number of weeks I quite punctiliously conformed to the home routine. I took my proper place at table at meal-times. I knocked off at a decent hour, made myself a respectable and normal member of society, and retired about the time I had been in the habit of settling down to my desk. There was but one flaw in my regularity. Though I shut myself in every morning after breakfast and stuck there dutifully till luncheon time, and returned again in the afternoon till five o'clock, I got very little work done. The habit of years was too strong to be broken by good resolutions. The sunlit street beckoned to me. The unaccustomed sounds of a city awake distracted me. Meantime Jeanne went around bragging about my reformation, till a sudden tightening of the money market brought her up with a start to the little weakness in the new arrangement.

After that I began gradually backsliding to my old ways, and for a while the domestic atmosphere was considerably strained. It was some time before we reached a compromise.

# Eli Ravage Irish Rose

*Irish, it's true, but  
Were Much Like the Play*

I said: "Just suppose for a minute that you are married to a traveling salesman or a stock company actor or a bridge engineer. Lots of nice girls *are* married to that kind of men and seem to be moderately happy in spite of their husbands' periodic absences from home—or maybe it's because of them. Well, every time I have a piece to write we'll just make believe that I am out of town, say, for two weeks. I'll only journey as far as my study, to be sure.

"What's more, to console you for my desertion you will take in a lodger, namely, myself. I won't be the most companionable lodger, but neither will I be a troublesome one. I'll straighten up my own bed. If the maid objects to my stealing in for a cup of coffee around eleven in the morning, I'll get my breakfast outside.

"Then there will be a nice little surprise for you, too—every evening just before dinner-time I'll drop in on you in my rôle of far-voyaging husband. Lastly, between jobs I'll give you an entire week of my society, we'll have friends in and go to restaurants and plays, and be generally gay and human."

Jeanne agreed to give the plan a try, and the first and gravest of our problems was effectually eliminated.

Then came major snarl number two, though once again Jeanne's grievance was a real one and I wanted keenly to satisfy it. We tried a joint account, which worked ideally when the waves of prosperity were at the crest; during depressions Jeanne tended to be a sort of silent partner. For like reasons the monthly allowance plan, so successful in other households, proved unsatisfactory.

In the end we reached a compromise. I bring in the revenue. Jeanne is general purchasing agent and committee of one on appropriations. Over one department, however, I still retain complete sovereignty, and shall always resist feminine encroachment. I mean of course my own shirts and neckwear. Otherwise I cannot truthfully say that I regret my loss of independence. My finances were never in better order.

Now people talk a great deal of loose nonsense about race and nationality and other high-sounding words of the same general import. My experience in running this international establishment of my own leads me to say that what they have in mind all the time is really a quite simple thing. I mean diet. It is not language or political shibboleths or flags or boundary-lines that have come nearest to driving Jeanne and me apart, but food.

Jeanne is, like most of her countrywomen, a born culinary genius. Her roasts and patties and salads are justly celebrated among all our friends. She has trained our maid to make the dinner-table look like a work of art. But all this, while I appreciate it as far as it goes, does not begin to go far enough. A meal to me that ends with cheese and raw fruit is a mutilation. My tenderest and most impressionable years, as I have already told you, were spent in the Middle West, and therefore to me the substance of a repast is the hot biscuit and its grace the pie or pudding. I crave them three times a day. Also, between midnight and daybreak I reach instinctively for the cooky jar. I don't know what else a home is, as distinguished from a mere lodging, than the place where the cooky jar is always full. But the French, though they educate their daughters in the domestic arts with the greatest care, make one absurd omission. They do not train them to bake.

We are by degrees working out a solution of this most staggering of all our problems. The difficulty in this instance has been to get Jeanne to take my plight seriously. Now that she has come to see that I am not just a bad little boy spoiled by too many sweets, and has perceived moreover—with some subtle maneuvering on my part—that the delicacies of the Middle West

for which my soul pines are not mere barbaric concoctions, she is striving heroically to correct the deficiencies of her early schooling.

Her pie-crust is slowly acquiring the crispness of the indigenous article. The biscuit dough of her strawberry shortcake, while it would perhaps not be recognized in New England, has a palatable sublimity all its own. And her rice soufflés are so vast an improvement on the puddings from which they sprang as to make one believe in the theory of evolution.

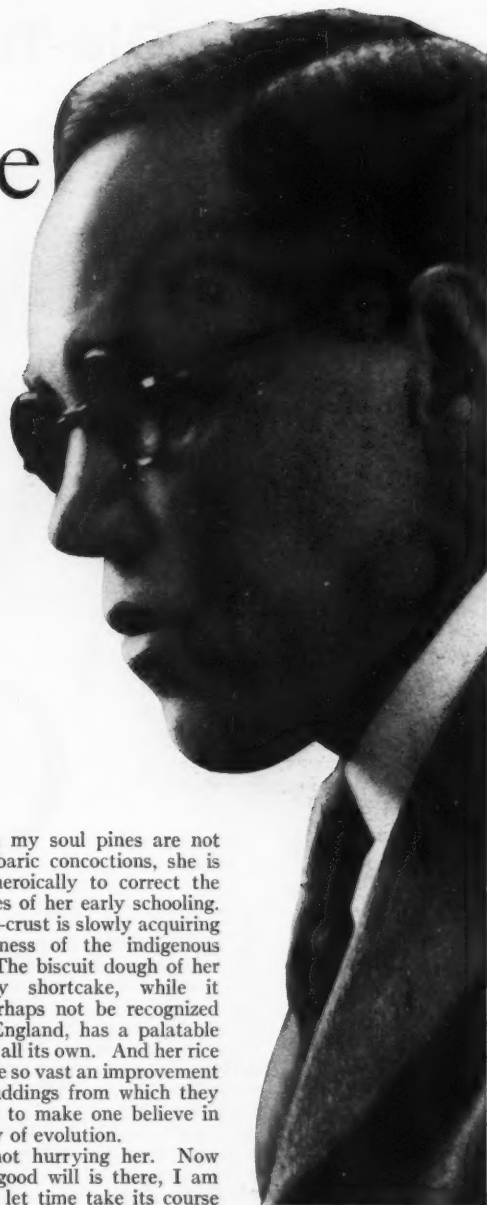
I am not hurrying her. Now that the good will is there, I am willing to let time take its course with her. For meanwhile I, too, am making progress. Camembert and its numerous fragrant family no longer seem as alien as they did at first, and even the conclusion of dinner with fruit, which I have been taught was only fit as the opening course for breakfast, is coming more and more to look gastronomically logical.

This inter-racial compromise is typical of all our adjustments. I should like to recommend our system to the League of Nations. Especially characteristic is the motive behind our accommodations. Countries have broken the peace over smaller differences than these. And many partnerships have ended in rows simply because the parties thereto, while they had some interest in common, lacked the personal cement of love to hold them together.

The question has been asked me times without number whether I think intermarriage between people of different faith is apt to be successful as a general rule. I can only answer that I would do it again if I had to, providing Jeanne was the other party. That is the basic general rule—be sure that you care greatly for one another.

A deep and genuine love is the one thing that matters. With that as a beginning, differences of class, religion, nationality and what-not, far from dividing you, will only add zest and piquancy to the relationship.

They will serve to keep you on the alert, and keep your courtship tenderness young and strong.



Mr. Ravage



*A Story of Old-Time*

Texas by



*Antõito*



*The Professor*



*The  
Yankee Doctor.*

By *Owen*

# Once Around

these trivialities of nature the hardy evangelists of democracy could not squander their attention. Some were thinking about their property; many about that of their neighbors; and several leading empire builders were already in session at the Dos Bocas saloon, O'Neil City, Flanagan County, Texas, with whisky at their elbows, chips in front of them and cards in their hands. The all-night game had begun.

Out of town, the light of the sun was leaving the day as softly and slowly as a mother on tiptoe when her child is asleep, and the two white-nosed horses coming along with Professor Salamanca and the beautiful young Antõito seemed to be snatching forty winks as they moved sluggishly, with heads hanging low. As to the state of the object at which the Professor now pointed a contemptuous finger, there could be no doubt; it had long passed the forty winks' mark; no one needed to go on tiptoe for that passive shape over by the ranch well. Against the universal stillness and the noiseless puffs of dust from the horses' steps, the Professor's voice grated acutely, though in a low register.

"As usual." And the pointing finger dropped.

Antõito's smile was dubious. "It may be as you think."

"You think not? Well, you have good chances to hear about the *porco's* habits."

Antõito's face betrayed no response to the thrust in these words. "He often also sleeps when he is sober," he explained, in his soft tenor. His mother was known to be Mexican; little else was known about him.

Two silent riders came by. With apprehensive eyes fixed on the Professor, they lifted their hats and passed on. The Professor took no notice of them, and they took none of Antõito.

Antõito was the Professor's assistant. The pair had drawn rein, and stood in contemplation of the thick, somnolent figure. Half down in the comfortable dust and half up against a windlass, it reposed, face tilted, head bare, mouth open, uttering bulky snores. Its stubby fingers spread upon its stomach, its shirt bulged over its belt, its honey-colored hair was as dense as a door-mat, and its name was Fluke Dade. The family came from the State of Georgia.

"He always sleeps with noise," the assistant now added.

"And Maria Sanchez—does she tell you how she enjoys that?"

At this second thrust, the Professor's watchful eye saw flash out in the seraphic countenance of Antõito, and instantly vanish, a glare which would have given the gravest distress to any God-fearing Christian; but no such person was at hand.

Clink! went something somewhere and they turned their heads sharply, but saw nothing, while they kept their hold upon the weapons at their hips. At that time in Flanagan County, Texas, the six-shooter was the seat of life. The snores of Fluke Dade continued to exhale violently in the stillness, and the riders remained alert; many of the surrounding live-oaks were of sufficient girth to screen a human figure, and if a noise boded no harm, why did its cause not step out into the open?

Clink! it came again; and the beautiful Antõito was the first to understand it. He let his reins dangle loose.

"The Yankee doctor is not sleeping," he remarked in his smooth tenor; "he is not one that sleeps." With this return thrust, he watched his chief's face, and saw there with gratification what a God-fearing Christian would have deplored to see. The Professor looked round for the doctor, but could not find him.

"He is down in the new well," pursued Antõito gently. "He digs it to pay Mr. Dade for his lodging." With eyes still watching for the effect of his words, he proceeded. "The Yankee doctor has been very poor, and Mr. Dade likes so very much to repose. So he sleeps, and now the water will soon be reached in his well. It must be nearly finished. The doctor digs no more the earth, you see, he makes ready for the dynamite. Perhaps he will set it off today, who knows? But I do not think he will work with his hands for Mr. Dade any more. Until lately the few who went to him have not been swift to pay their indebtedness. Now it begins to be different." And Antõito paused in his skillful words.

the Author of

# "The Virginian"

Illustrations by  
Forrest C. Crooks



Colonel  
Steptoe McDee

Maria  
Sanchez

Fluke Dade

## Wister the Clock

"So that is what the quack is doing in the swine's well!" observed the Professor, upon whose temper the skill had acted.

"In the Yankee's office I have seen his medical diploma. It is from a place called Harvard," murmured the diabolic Antoñito. "He received it but two years ago."

"He is a quack. What took you to his door? I tell you he is a quack."

The beautiful boy raised his eyebrows. "It was your letter to him which you bade me carry——" He paused again, and spreading his hands wide with a gesture of respect and candor, completed his thrust. "How otherwise should I have been willing to approach your upstart rival?"

At the word rival, expressions concerning the Harvard diploma and its possessor burst from the lips of Professor Salamanca. These bore little relation to the healing art.

The respectful Antoñito could have listened to them a long while without satiety, but a new sound cut them short; a voice behind them said, "Good evening," and again both Professor and assistant promptly made the gesture of self-preservation habitual at moments of uncertainty in Flanagan County. But it was a friend they saw, and they relaxed, and dropped the seat of life back into their holsters.

"Good evening," he repeated. "Ah, Professor, I'm acquainted with no lady as quick on the trigger as you, ma'am; but if I had harbored designs, your gesture would have been posthumous."

It was Colonel Steptoe McDee, formerly of Alabama, who had ridden thus close upon them, unsuspected through the muffling dust and under cover of the plentiful live-oaks. The set of his old neat coat was punctilious.

"'Pon my honor, Professor," he pursued, "each day you live makes you ten years younger!" And the wiry, delicate little gentleman swept his hat chivalrously down to his boot. He was first in the hearts of all Flanagan County. Cheerfulness bubbled from him, but it did not dwell in his eyes. These had seen better days of which he never spoke.

The Professor sat unmoved by the compliment, although her large face grew red. Stolid she sat, every inch the personage to whom during twenty years Flanagan County had repaired in times of sickness: a healer supreme; deeply versed in the occult; master of nature's mysteries; in whose impressive consulting rooms amid maps of the zodiac, globes of crystal, specimen

horoscopes, and other standard medical supplies, hung a stuffed alligator from the ceiling; while upon the walls glittered blue and gold testimonials from several monarchs of remote empires in the Orient. These sovereigns declared, over their attested signatures, that by the Professor's art they had been cured of ills with names so formidable that such citizens of Flanagan County as could read, when they came to these words, abandoned any further attempt at perusal of the documents.

There sat Professor Salamanca—wide-faced, heavy-browed, not chilled at all by her forty-five years, her upper lip darked with down, and her feelings plainly to be read in her countenance. She could veil her emotions when she chose, but seldom took the trouble to do so. Quite different was the youthful Antoñito; he usually allowed nothing that went on behind the flawless mask of his beauty to show through.

THE Colonel knew why the Professor's face remained so red, but he cared not at all. Revisited by an old trouble, he had changed his medical adviser; he had recently called in the rival! Of course she knew this. What that went on in the county ever escaped her? She was a power in the county; her stuffed alligator haunted the brains of many who had no objection to committing murder, but still dreaded the dark. She was their dark; absent, she loomed in their thoughts; present, their eyes swerved from her as their hats came off. But the Colonel was their light, their sunshine, and every gray hair of his head was safe from her. A snore from the well inspired his next remark.

"That was an extra loud report, Professor. Notwithstanding his uncomfortable position, our friend sleeps powerfully. Don't you opine Mr. Dade can become unconscious at almost any angle?"

Professor Salamanca said nothing, and the Colonel gamboled on.

"Rest is Mr. Dade's chief activity, I do believe. They tell me that back in Georgia the Dades from father to son have handed rest down as a sacred fam'ly heirloom. And they're an old fam'ly." He expected no response, and continued: "I wonder



**C** Professor Salamanca was a power in Flanagan County. As the Colonel said, she was a most remarkable

what our friend dreams about? Have you studied the dreams of the lower animals, Professor? Those of the oyster must be well-nigh as disturbing as Mr. Dade's."

"Let us go, Antoñito," said Professor Salamanca.

Something at the well turned all heads in that direction. The chain which hung down into it from the windlass was clanking, and shouts from below had restored Mr. Dade to consciousness.

On discovering the Professor, he muttered an uneasy greeting, and began to turn the windlass busily.

"It is the Yankee now coming up," said Antoñito.

"Heavy work," commented Colonel Steptoe McDee, observant of how Mr. Dade's strong muscles were straining. "The doctor evidently is bringing truth with him."

"All quacks are liars," stated Professor Salamanca.

"He is a big young man," explained Antoñito. "He weighs much."

The little Colonel did not explain. He never explained.

"He will have lighted the fuse," pursued Antoñito. "Will you not wait for the end of the work?" he asked his chief. "It will make a grand noise."

"I will wait," the chief replied; and while the slow clanking of the chain continued, she addressed Colonel Steptoe McDee. "It is some time since we have met."

The Colonel laid a hand upon his heart. "My loss, Professor."

"You do not look very well. How are your spirits on rising?"

"Better than Adam's before he ate the apple. My little old liver goes as gay as a three-year-old."

The Professor raised her voice. "I can read another story on your skin, Colonel Steptoe McDee. You are threatened with—but let others tell you."

"I hope it's something I can pronounce," said the little man.

"Let the Professor tell you what you're threatened with, Colonel."

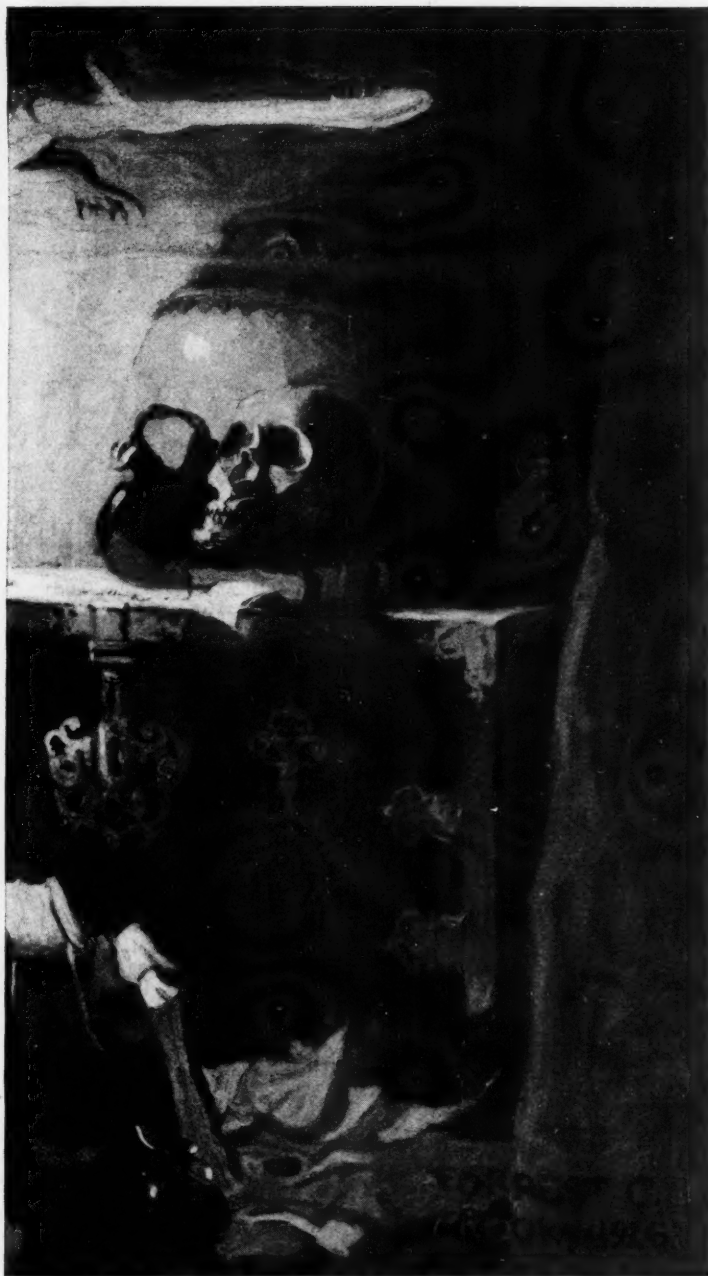
They had forgotten the well and the windlass, where the chain had ceased rattling. The rival had been hauled out into upper air, and he stood now at the brink of the hole.

"It would help if the Professor told you," he repeated. "I can't find a thing the matter with you."

Doc Leonard was stripped to the waist; a wet gleam shone over his skin and his hair was matted.

"Quittin' work already?" inquired Fluke Dade.





*woman and no laughing matter; she jested with none.*

The young practitioner rested his eye quietly for a moment upon the man whom he was paying handsomely for his board. "For today," he then responded, and addressed the Colonel with more cordiality. "I've tamped that fuse three solid feet in clay. You'd think I was a professional blaster."

"It's early to quit workin'," insisted Dade.

Doc Leonard looked away from his unlovely host and up at the sky, whence the crimson was fading. "I'm through for today," he repeated.

"Say, you've brung your tools up along with you," said Fluke heavily.

"That won't do them any harm," said the New Englander.

"In Texas we leave tools lay where they're wanted," Fluke grumbled, "and don't make folks haul them up where they're not needed."

The doctor now had his shirt over his head, and spoke through it cheerily. "Throw them in again."

To this Mr. Dade's intellect could muster no retort. He stroked his thick yellow mustache, and it was Antoñito who spoke now, in tones of disappointment.

"But the explosion, has it gone off already?"

"That's for the first thing tomorrow," answered Doc Leonard, and he added, "and it's my last work on this ranch." His shirt was buttoned, he threw his coat on and gathered the pickax and other implements.

"Well, I guess I'll eat in town at the Pickwick," said Fluke Dade; and thus took his simple leave of the company.

Since the doctor's appearance Professor Salamanca had neither spoken nor seemed to attend to the words of the others. Disdaining to bestow so much as a glance upon her rival, she had sat upon her horse, withdrawn into her private meditations; and now she rode up to the well and looked into it. The rival stood within six feet of her, but her disregard of his presence was complete.

"Come, Antoñito," she commanded; "the fireworks are put off till the morning."

The obedient assistant followed his chief, whose face would have given a God-fearing Christian renewed distress.

Colonel Steptoe McDee and the young New Englander were left alone, and the Colonel made his little joke again.

"Well, Doctor, and so you have postponed finding truth till tomorrow."

Leonard laughed a little. "Truth's apt to be dry. It's wetness I'm after—and release! And no more bargains with brutes like that!"

His eye followed somberly for a moment the thick figure of Mr. Dade in the distance, bestriding his horse on the road to the Pickwick Hotel, O'Neil City, Flanagan County, Texas.

Colonel Steptoe McDee was thoughtfully watching Professor Salamanca and the beautiful Antoñito, as they appeared and disappeared among the live-oaks on their way to the home of the stuffed alligator and the crystal globes.

"There goes an edifying couple," remarked the doctor.

The Colonel's nod was emphatic. "Your term 'couple,' sir, is happily selected, since no ceremony has made them one."

"I know," said Leonard, too scornful to laugh. "I know. And that half-breed's young enough to be her son."

"It's his bread and butter, Doctor! He never got that from Miss Maria Sanchez—and in these days she is taking a deep interest in our friend Mr. Dade."

"Sweet-scented bunch, the lot of them!" The young man from Cape Cod ruminated a moment. "Can't old Salamanca make that smooth little lizard marry her?"

"She can make him do anything, sir. But mark you, if she tied Antoñito by the nuptial knot Miss Sanchez would vigorously renew her lovely favors to him. And the law in the United States does not allow any man to make two honest women at once!"

To this pleasantry the Colonel won no response.

Disgust left scant room for anything else in Leonard's serious young mind for the moment. He pondered again. "I have been a medical student," he then observed, "but it seems there are some things left I've got to get used to."

Colonel Steptoe McDee postponed an impulse to moralize. He kept up the jocularly which he had made his refuge when circumstances had first settled him in Flanagan County, and which was now more incessant than his natural bent.

"The Professor is a wonderful woman, sir," he began. "Widely versatile, yet never misses the point. It may be an infant she has to treat for scroll ear or harelip, it may be a horse with bots, or it may be one of her major operations, like when she seeks information from the stars for some anxious husband who has consulted her as to the paternity of his latest unexpected offspring—she goes to the point right away. And that's what you don't, Doctor. You can learn from Professor Salamanca, sir."

"Can't you teach me instead, Colonel? I doubt if she is sincerely attached to me."

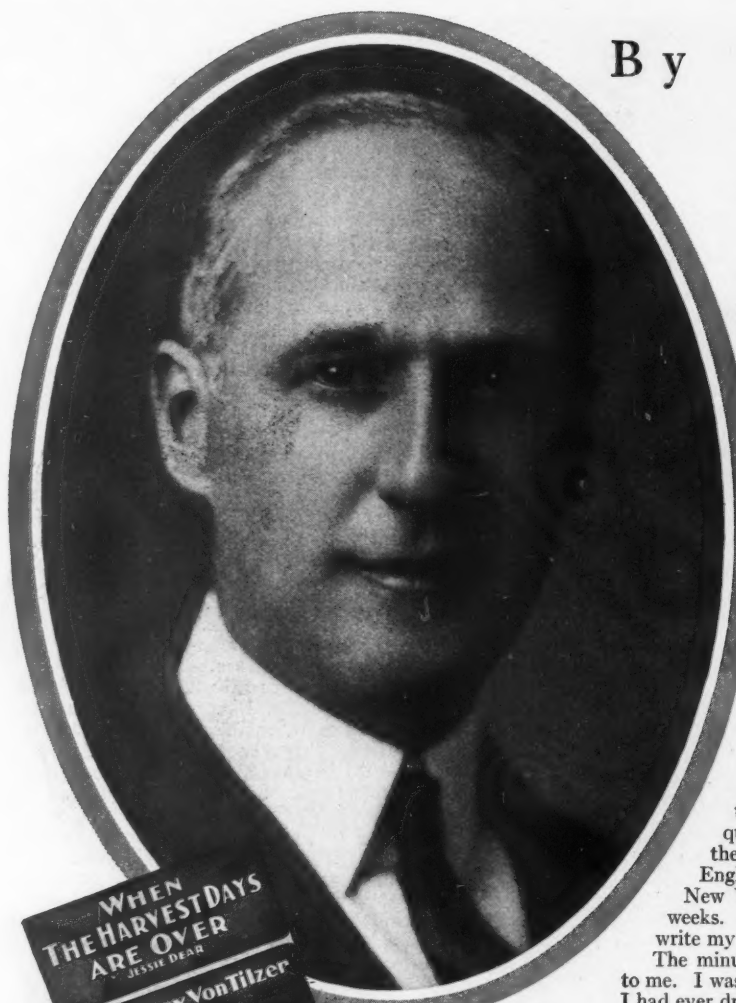
"There I fear you are quite correct, sir."

"And how well does she love you?"

"Professor Salamanca's affection (Continued on page 140)

By *Harry Von*

# 3000 Before His



WHEN  
THE HARVEST DAYS  
ARE OVER  
JESSE DEAR

Harry Von Tilzer

Harry Von Tilzer



**B**EFORE I produced one real song hit I, either alone or with a partner, wrote more than 3,000 songs. Not all of these were published, but those I did sell were sold outright at from \$2 to \$25 a song.

Now I don't claim that is a record for the number of unsuccessful songs written, but I do believe it is pretty nearly a record for grim determination.

I had mighty little to start with. An average Indiana boy, I was as a kid interested in circuses and shows and from the time I was eleven I would sneak away from home to hang around the stage door of Crone's Garden in Indianapolis.

At fifteen, I virtually ran away from home to go with a barn-storming company that a few weeks later disbanded at Bloomington, Illinois. That night I bummed my way by freight into Chicago, and settling down at an old theatrical boarding-house began my real professional career. Within a few weeks I had a small part with a road company playing in Iowa. We played "Hazel Kirke," "Woman Against Woman," "Mountebanks," "Ten Nights in a Bar-Room," and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Then just as we were going well the leading man went on a

prolonged spree and we closed down at Champaign, Illinois. For several weeks I coached a local minstrel show, and with enough money ahead to settle up my board bill and get to Chicago, I hustled back to the Big City and landed a job with the Chamberlain Stock Company.

It was while I was playing with this company that the song-writing bee first really stung me. In addition to playing parts, I either had to do a single specialty with songs, or double with a soubrette. In those days it was difficult to obtain songs in this country, and as a consequence actors used to watch the "Clipper," the big theatrical paper of that day, for announcements of English song publishers. To obtain songs from either New York or England was a matter of from two to six weeks. Rather than wait this long I decided to try to write my own.

The minute I started my song writing something happened to me. I was doing something that I liked better than anything I had ever dreamed of. I had always been fond of music and as a child of five I would follow a band all over our town. Both my father and mother were music lovers and when I was ten my mother bought a piano and I was started taking music-lessons. I refused to practise regularly and after a few lessons I quit. But I loved the piano and I had a natural talent that made it possible for me to play tunes after I had heard them a few times.

As I have explained, the stage had first attracted my youthful ambitions but now, at sixteen, with my first songs written I realized that the thing I really wanted to do was to be a successful music composer.

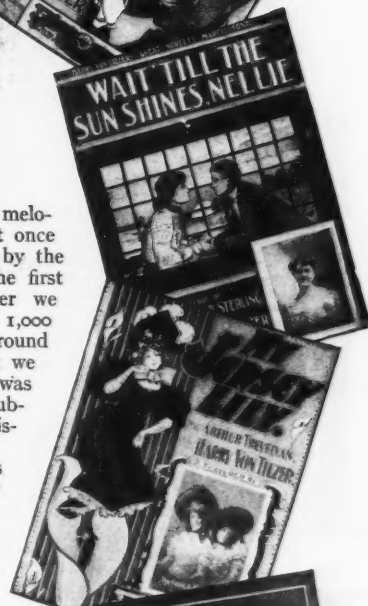
Shortly after I started my song writing our company closed down owing to the sudden death of Mr. Chamberlain. Almost immediately I joined the Maud Atkinson Stock Company and the following season I went with the "Breezy Time Company" and stayed with it until we reached Terre Haute, where I tripped over a roll of carpet and seriously injured my leg. This compelled me to leave the show and return home, for my first visit in three years.

While home I spent most of my hours writing songs and here for almost the first time the idea that I would not only write popular songs but make a fortune at it fully crystallized in my mind. With a number called "My Sweet T'ing" finished, I got the idea that I might be able to place it with an act. Little Katie Rooney was then playing with a show in Indianapolis and I showed the song to her. She liked it, had an orchestration made for it and it was introduced in Indianapolis—my first professional song—for which, by the way, I did not get a cent.

A few weeks later a company called "Our Irish Visitors" hit Indianapolis, and since they needed a man to play a Dutch part, I applied for the job and got it. With the show at that time was Lottie Gilson, whom I still consider one of the greatest popular ballad singers this country has ever produced, and through her I was encouraged to stick to my song writing.

When the show reached Chicago the owners got to quarreling among themselves and closed down. I had with me several of my songs, one of which I titled "Mama Make Goo Goo Eyes for Papa"—the first of the long string of Goo Goo songs.

# Tilzer, who wrote Songs First Real "Hit"



M. Witmark & Son, music publishers, had a branch office in Chicago and I showed the "Goo Goo" song to the manager, Sol Bloom—at present the well-known New York Congressman. Bloom bought the song on a royalty basis. I thought I had a hit but the publishers refused to do any more than issue professional copies; the song died an early death, and I received no royalty.

For a time I tried to do something with my other songs, but publishers were few and far between in those days and I made little progress, no matter how determined I was. Suddenly realizing that I had no luck in Chicago, I decided to try New York—but I had no money for a ticket.

Back in Indianapolis for a visit I met Sol Munter, who handled high-grade horses. I told him one day how badly I wanted to go to New York.

"Well, if you don't mind traveling in a caboose I can ship you there free of cost," he said to me. "I'm sending two car-loads of horses East and all you'll have to do is to keep your eyes on them and see that nothing goes wrong."

I jumped at the offer and the following day I boarded my New York-bound freight-train, bubbling with joy over the knowledge that I was about to realize my dream of dreams.

A week later I landed in Jersey City with \$1.65 in my pocket. That was in 1892.

**T**HE rest is a long and heart-breaking story of fighting and struggling to get on my feet, write hits and get them published—and most of all get more than a few dollars out of them.

For a year or two I had to earn my living playing small parts with theatrical companies going on tours. Each time I would carefully save my money and then come back to New York and try again at the song-writing game.

My first approach to a genuine hit was a song called "I Love You Both," which I peddled all over town. Finally after it had been turned down by a dozen publishers, Willis Woodward decided to buy it. On my earnest pleading he finally agreed to pay me \$25 for it.

This song did get me some little recognition and led to my knowing Tony Pastor. At that time Tony Pastor's Theater was a hang-out for a good many actors and Tony was able to help me a great deal by getting specialty people to sing my songs there.

Up to this time I was battling with my back to the wall. Whenever I met a publisher I would follow him up and shoot all my new songs at him. In this way I met Maurice Shapiro—and dropping into his place, played for him a song that I had just written, "When You Do the Ragtime Dance."

"How much do you want for it?" Shapiro queried.

"I need money in a hurry," I replied, "so I'll let you have it for ten dollars."

Shapiro shook his head. "Give you five."

"I must have seven dollars for my room rent," I said.

Shapiro held out for a minute and then gave me the seven dollars. To the best of my knowledge that seven-dollar song was the first song to carry the word "ragtime" in its title. It became a fairly good seller—but of course I never received another cent from it. However, it prompted actors and publishers to take me seriously.

For one thing it brought me the friendship of Andrew Sterling and almost immediately we agreed to collaborate—he to do

the lyrics and I the melodies. We got busy at once and turned out songs by the wholesale. During the first year we were together we wrote no less than 1,000 songs—in fact, we ground them out so fast that we had Shapiro, who was doing most of our publishing, groggy from listening to them.

Whenever we hit his fancy he would pay from \$5 to \$15 for the song—outright. The money was small but our dreams were big and we were determined to crash in finally with a big success.

But we weren't really making a living—despite the fact that we were turning out songs by the score. Many a time we could get nothing for them and went to bed hungry. An occasional vaudeville date that I had with Herbert Ashley saved Andy and me from starving altogether.

For a while Ashley and I landed a berth with a vaudeville show but after a short tour and a quarrel I returned to Sterling and again we started our song factory working overtime. I don't believe any two men ever wrote as many songs as we did. We must have turned out at least 2,000 more songs—and never one big success.

For months on end it was the same old story; we peddled songs from one publisher to another without finding takers. Often we were broke. I remember the end of one month when our money was gone and for days we were afraid to go to our room until after the landlady had gone to bed. Finally we were so down and out we had nothing to eat. That very night, when we'd gone all day without a bite, we knocked out a song and early next morning before the landlady was up, slipped out.

All day we walked from one publisher to another. Finally at six o'clock we tried Dunn on Twenty-fourth Street. It was late and we had to plead with him to listen to it. Finally he consented and I sat down at the piano and played and sang the song. Dunn liked it but he said he would not buy it until his daughter could hear it.


"That's nice of you, Mr. Dunn," I said, "but we haven't eaten in twenty-four hours."

Finally we talked him into giving us an advance of five dollars, with the agreement that if he wanted to buy the song he could have it by paying us an additional \$10 the next day.

The following morning he said he (Continued on page 194)



A New Novel by *Martha Ostenso*



# Dark Dawn

*The Story So Far:*

LUCIAN DORRIT worshiped his father, "the great William Dorrit"—more than six feet of brawn and muscle, a huge, patient man destined for big things, who had come out to the prairies in his young manhood, dreaming dreams, and been beaten and harnessed by the soil—the soil and his wife, Agatha. Beaten in all but his dreams—no one could take away his dreams from William Dorrit; it was in achievement that he failed. Body and soul, Lucian was built very much after his father's image—a strapping, ungainly boy, hungering within for he hardly knew what.

William was often in Lucian's thoughts during that golden Indian summer when he set out afoot, after six weeks' work in the harvest-fields, to walk back to his home town of Loyola. Lucian too dreamed young dreams then. Much as he loved the soil, he would not be tied to it like his father, he decided; he would go down into the world and achieve.

At the town of Lost River he stopped to visit his Aunt Ella and Uncle Dave, and there learned with a sudden shock that his father was ill. Aunt Ella had never been any friend of Agatha Dorrit's; she had watched her brother break under Agatha's domination for twenty years. As Lucian hurriedly departed by train next day for Loyola, Aunt Ella watched him go. "Just like William," she thought. "And some darn woman'll get him, too—same as one got William."

A great light went out for Lucian when, soon after his return to Loyola, William Dorrit died. But he had to take up the work of managing the farm—followed always by the watchful eye, the complaining tongue of his mother. Like William, Lucian had always been afraid of his mother. He felt timid and apologetic in her presence. Now he would tramp alone over the fields and work long hours out-of-doors, as his father had done, just to be away from her. He got no sympathy in his new grief from his brothers Arnold and Manlius. His sister Leona, to whom he had always been close, understood. Most of all, his friend Mons Torson understood—a Scandinavian farmer whose rough and ready philosophy and comradeship had been a mainstay of Lucian's boyhood.

Across the way from Mons lived Hattie Murker, who ran the farm left her by her father—ran it with no help except that of her half-witted brother Bert, and ran it well. Few people had ever got close to Hattie Murker, and there were queer stories afoot regarding her. She was a compellingly handsome woman—and a hard and grasping and ambitious one, the neighbors said. She had been engaged to Mons' brother Ben, but he had been killed by his horse just before they were to be married. There were those who went so far as to suggest that Ben had taken this as the only way out of marrying Hattie.

One evening Lucian came to see Mons and did not find him home. On his way back he met Hattie at her gate. "Won't you come in?" she invited him. Lucian stepped within her door.

# who Wrote "WILD GEESSE"

Illustrations by  
W. Smithson Broadhead



*It was on evenings when Bert remained at home that Hattie's charm over Lucian failed of its wonted power.*

W. SMITHSON  
BROADHEAD

The tongues of the wind lapped at the snow on the rivers, licked it up into great edged white spines and left exposed wide expanses of green; dark ice, crystalline and mysterious.

A pale sun traveled reluctantly over its daily route and at night

the sky was a silver frosty lace of stars.

Early in January, less than a month after the marriage of Lucian Dorrit and Hattie Murker, the frail wife of Peter Strand died on the farm that lay just east of the Murker place. Lucian could not have believed that a man could break down so completely as Peter Strand had done on that bitter January day of the funeral. Nor had he ever seen anyone weep as Karen Strand had wept that day.

The cruelty of it all would probably not have touched Lucian so deeply had he not known, rather intimately, the brave efforts Peter Strand had put forth in his struggle with life on the prairies. He and his wife had come from Norway and had settled near Loyola some fifteen years ago. Mrs. Strand had been a delicate, pretty woman, with eyes as blue as the northern sea from which she came, and she had shed much sweetness about her in that rigid prairie life. Peter Strand had done well there, but his wife had not taken kindly to the new world and had slowly pined away for her native fjords. At the end of their first year in the district their only child, Karen, had been born and for a time they were very happy.

One spring, by dint of colossal labor without help in the fields, Strand had managed to send his wife and daughter for a visit to Norway, but the sensitive heart of the little woman had found no

Later that night, when he had returned home, Lucian said to his family, "I'm going to marry Hattie Murker on Christmas Day." They could not speak from amazement, and Lucian suddenly hurried up-stairs to his room and flung himself on his bed.

Leona came in. "Oh, why did you do it?" she demanded fiercely. "I'm going to tell her to leave you alone. I'm going to!"

Lucian sprang up. "Don't you dare!" he warned her. "I've got to go through with it! Don't you dare!"

THE winter at Loyola that year was one of brittle, glassy cold. The earliest settlers could not remember when the ice had been so deep on the lakes and streams, and an aged half-breed trapper near Lost River declared that there had not been such a season for half a century. The white, life-devouring winds from the north and the east swooped down hungrily on the little unsheltered prairie town and its surrounding farms and went screaming on, a fiend of frozen lust.

happiness in the beauty of those northern mountains without her mate. She had returned, given herself for a few years more to the service of the church in Loyola where she had been organist, played and laughed and sung with her growing daughter, worked and hoped and dreamed with the faithful Peter Strand—and died at last, leaving despair in the hearts of those who had loved her.

Heartless, however, as that experience had seemed to Lucian Dorrit, there had been one other incident during those bleak months of early winter that had left him utterly desolate for a time and had caused him to wonder whether there was a heart in the world anywhere. He had lost his friend, Mons Torson.

It was Bert Murker who had gone to Torson with the news that Lucian Dorrit was going to marry Hattie. Torson had refused to believe the story until he had had it confirmed by rumors that were afloat in Loyola. Now, in that prairie country a man can go about his work on a small, cheerless homestead, year in and year out, with a mind solitary and at peace—or he can have a mind attended by a thousand devils. But when a man moves with the slow, gentle and yet ironical obstinacy of Mons Torson, there is no telling what is in his mind.

But one thing is sure, and that is that since Mons had been forced to accept the story that Bert Murker had told him, there were nights that drove him out of his house, out upon the stark, wind-riven prairie, out anywhere at all so long as he was not left to himself within the close confines of his own four walls. Sometimes he would spend the whole night puttering about the barn, startling the drowsy beasts in their stalls with the sudden ghostly nimbus of his lantern; or mending broken implements in the wagon-shed where his fingers would become cracked and swollen with the cold. His ear would be ever alert to catch a sound, a footfall, a voice.

Some night, he knew, Lucian Dorrit would find the courage to come. Mons Torson was afraid of what he might tell him if he did. And so he moved about his place as if he were trying to hide from something. When he was in his house he kept the lamp turned low, the shades drawn, the door locked. And his cat—it had been his brother Ben's cat—would sit, blackly fixed against the whitewashed wall of the "shack," luminously, unwholesomely at gaze where human eye could not follow.

Finally, one blowing night, the cat's eyes turned sharply to the door. A knock had come there. Mons Torson blew out the light and sat motionless. He heard Luce Dorrit outside, calling, knocking. At last he went away and Mons heard him down among the stables, calling, calling.

Then, because he had not the courage to stay, Mons Torson left before another week and took his way north to the winter camps on Lake Superior. And Lucian, because he had been sure that his friend had been there and had known of his coming, went about for days in utter bewilderment and a desolate sense of loss.

THE still, deadly cold bore down upon the Murker farm on its bare knoll, wove fast its unscrupulous web enclosing all life there in unescapable privacy.

The Murker house was high and rectangular, with a low summer kitchen at the end nearer the farm buildings, and a porch with six slender pillars at the other end facing the road. At the foot of the hill grew a row of six evergreens shadowing the highway, and beside the house, sentinel-like and austere, there was a single pine-tree. In summer the slope down to the road was a flag of color that could be seen for miles away. Hattie always won prizes for her blooms at the county fair. She could grow rare varieties on that windy slope that would take root nowhere else in the district—she was that wilful, people said.

The buildings and equipment were more modern than those of other farms in the district. People in Loyola hinted—they really knew little about it—that Hattie deprived herself of the mere decencies of life in order that her farm might boast the healthiest stock in the country. Mert Naley, of Castle's Livery Barn, declared that she wore long black skirts because she was without stockings underneath. And didn't they have it from her brother—Bert Murker's own words, unreliable though they were—that she often forced him to do with two meals a day when she was saving for some coveted improvement on the farm? She was her father all over again, anyone could see that, the "dead spit" of him. If it hadn't been for old man Murker, poor Bert would be something more than a child now. Everybody said that it was his beating the boy that had done it, and they wouldn't put it past Hattie.

Within doors of the Murker house there was an atmosphere of complete serenity, order. A house where no woman lives, but which is kept immaculate by a man, will have that same vacant, unlivid-in air about it. The chief reason for this condition was

that living went on in the kitchen and a flight of stairs leading up from the kitchen permitted entry to the sleeping quarters in the upper part of the house without the necessity of passing through the parlor and the dining-room. Even the kitchen was approached through the summer-house, where wet overcoats, hats, overshoes must be removed.

The dining-room, used only when there was "company," the parlor, and the spare bedroom which opened into the parlor, were all furnished in the complicated knickknack fashion of farm-houses—curly, high-polished furniture; figured linoleum; braided rag rugs, round and oblong; a china-closet in the parlor containing inscribed sea-shells, silver spoons and a copper pin-tray with raised images of sky-scrapers and monuments, souvenirs from Eastern cities mysteriously foregathered here; a fragile pink porcelain slipper wearing on its instep a great ormolu rose; a cut-glass berry bowl, a large green mustache-cup bearing the word "Father" in gold. On the walls hung pictures in ponderous frames, pictures of storms at sea and of pastoral scenes impossibly fair. The front part of the house was rarely heated except when there were visitors, and then a large stove with a bulging belly of insglass panes would glow red in its corner in the dining-room. On the coldest days Hattie was forced to make a fire there in order to heat the rooms up-stairs by means of the pipe which led through them to the chimney.

ANYONE looking in through the window of the Murker kitchen on one of these winter evenings would have been struck by the incongruous company of three seated within; might have thought that here was a crazy stage set with three scenes run into one, three characters fused by the glow of the lamp and yet utterly separate, each in its own nimbus. Luce Dorrit, seated in an upright chair, leaning forward over a book open on his knees, reading the same line again and again with monotonous, unseeing repetition; Hattie, his wife, rocking slowly to and fro in the low cane-bottom rocking-chair, her hands full of sewing, her fingers making swift, dexterous knots in the thread; and Bert Murker, large, lumpy, round-bodied, his small eyes rising like half-moons over his fat cheeks and shifting from his corn-popper on the kitchen stove to Luce Dorrit in his chair, with a cunning, evil look, at once crafty and stupid.

There would be few words exchanged on such an evening in that low-ceilinged room with its staid pattern of light and shadow. The watcher at the window might see Hattie pause now and then in her rocking, breath held, and lift her head in an attitude of listening to some sound outside the house. He might see Bert go quietly to the built-in cupboard, come back to the stove with a plate of butter in his hand and melt it to pour over his pop-corn. There would be no word spoken as he offered his fluffy white confection to Hattie and Luce in turn, his eyes greedily watching what each took. There would be the sound of a chair being drawn to the stove as Bert seated himself with his feet in the oven, the dish of pop-corn in his lap, then renewed silence as Bert ate with wolfish haste, licking the butter from his fingers when he had done.

At the end of an hour or two, Hattie would get up noisily, carry her sewing-basket into the dining-room and place it behind the hood of the sewing-machine which stood between two windows. She would return directly, lift the lamp from the table, look down at Lucian, and presently, through the motes that danced in the light before her, would come her voice—incisive, yet curiously subdued: "It's time to go to bed!"

Strange, however, as that household was guessed to be, its curious visitors that winter were few. In an existence narrowed by rigorous cold, even the hardy folk contained their curiosity and let the visits of two or three whose interest in the matter was insupportable secure for them the news of life on the Murker farm, as it was still called.

It was no mere curiosity, however, that brought Peter Strand and Karen from their farm to the east, nearly a mile through snow and cold, to spend an hour in the Murker kitchen.

"I could not stand it over dere tonight—alone vit' the little girl," Peter explained one night as he seated himself before the stove, his angular frame bending forward, his thin hands hanging down between his large knees, his great eyes staring. "I could hear my Anna singing in the vind, Luce. I swear, by heaven, I did. I hear her walk on the stone—just outside the door—and I go and look outside and the door blow shut behind me—like she vant to keep me out dere vit' her. I go in again—and I hear music like the church organ—all round the house. And Carrie, she hear it too. Didn't you, Carrie?"

Solemnly he turned his eyes to Karen and she nodded her head in reply. Lucian's heart ached for the big man haunted by his





**C.** Lucian felt unspeakably false. Hattie must not see him as he saw himself. His dreams must be put forever behind him.

love. He looked at Hattie, wondering if she, a woman, could not say something to comfort the stricken man.

Hattie had sat down in the only rocking-chair in the room. She rocked slowly to and fro, her hands clasped in her lap.

"It isn't Christian to believe such things, Peter Strand," she said without looking at him. "Ghosts! In my family, such fears were spanked out of us children soon's we showed 'em. You can't expect comfort from the Lord unless you believe in God's word. The dead stays buried until the Judgment Day. They don't go walking round playing organs where there ain't any."

For several minutes there was total silence save for the rhythmic creaking of Hattie's rocker against the floor. Outside there was a rushing sound of the wind in the branches of the tall pine-tree that stood in front of the house. Peter Strand sat as though he had not heard Hattie's voice. Presently he spoke in a very low tone, as though he were talking to h'mself.

"Some people see t'ings—and hear t'ings—and some people don't. I t'ink so—yes. I walk beside Mons Torson's place last spring and he's out in the rain—digging up dose willows on hees place. A fionny man, don't vant a little villow to stand. I t'ink

sometimes he see t'ings in dose willows. I t'ink so—yes. Maybe he hear t'ings too."

It was evident that Hattie was becoming more and more uncomfortable. Her chair had been moving faster and more jerkily as she listened to Peter Strand's mutterings. Suddenly it ceased altogether.

"You were talking about a new plow for the spring work, Peter," she said abruptly. "There's one down in the shed here that'll be just as good as any new one you can buy. I'm gettin' a new sulky in the spring and I won't need the one I have. You can have it if you want. It'll save you that money." She got up and went to where the lantern hung from its nail on the wall. "Come out with me and I'll show it to you. Hand me my coat there, Luce."

"Let me take Peter down," Lucian suggested.

"You look after Carrie," she said. "Hand me my coat." Lucian could not help a feeling of mild surprise at Hattie's abruptness. There was much about his wife that he did not fully understand as yet, but he had never thought of her as impulsive. He knew that she was capable of kindness, but he had never heard her speak a good word for Peter Strand. Besides, although they had talked of buying a gang-plow in the spring Lucian did not know that Hattie had made up her mind about it.

As soon as the door had closed behind Hattie and Peter Strand, Karen turned to Lucian.

"She doesn't like me," she said suddenly, in the direct way that had been one of the first things Lucian had noticed in the little daughter of Peter Strand when she had come with her father, years ago, to visit William Dorrit.

Karen had been only a child then and Lucian had been a boy of twelve. But he had never forgotten the look that had come into her face when he had whistled for her the song of the brook that ran through the Dorrit farm. Lucian's imitative efforts had been little more than faintly suggestive, but Karen had listened as one enraptured. When she had started school, it was Lucian who had seen her safely home in the early darkness of winter afternoons. And although she had grown since then—she was fourteen now—and taken on the expressions and mannerisms of her elders, Lucian still thought of her as a mere child, a wistful embodiment of those days when the world was still unreal and the brook was peopled with the frail creatures of his fancy.

Lucian looked at her and laughed.

"Why, Spingle!" It was a name he had given her years before, for no earthly reason at all. "Everybody likes you, Spingle!"

She made no reply. She looked about her, at the door leading to the main part of the house, at the stairway leading from the kitchen to the rooms above.

"Where is Bert?" she asked.

"In bed—an hour ago."

She got from her chair quickly and hurried to where she had hung her coat on the wall beside the door. When she had rummaged about in the pockets for a moment she drew out some bits of paper and came back to Lucian.

"I've done some more drawings," she told him and held out the papers in her hand.

Lucian took the drawings and went to the table where he spread them out under the lamp. They were delicate, remarkable copies of fay creatures from tales illustrated by Dulac and Rackham. Karen stood back with breathless expectancy while Luce bent over and examined them, one by one. When he had seen them all he straightened up and looked at her with frank admiration in his eyes.

"Spingle, they're great!" he exclaimed.

Proud as she was of his praise, she said nothing, but gathered the drawings up hastily and hurried them back into her coat pocket again.

"And you're still dreaming of being an artist some day—in the big world, Carrie?" Lucian asked her when they had gone back to their chairs beside the kitchen stove.

"It isn't a dream," she protested. "I'm going to be."

Something touched Lucian then with an infinite sadness. What a pensive, delicate little face she had. He had never looked at that face without thinking of a ring of brown and gold elves dancing. Now he thought of something more. He thought of the heart-break that awaited her whose wild feet were already set toward a stern goal.

How little Karen Strand knew of the world she had resolved to conquer!

"Don't you love to sit like this and just listen!" she said, almost in a whisper. "Kjaere is right. Some people can hear things—



and see them, too. I can hear the Norns—I can hear them now—crooning and wafting in the wind outside."

She sat up very straight in her chair, the lamplight shining on her round forehead and dancing in the green-gold of her eyes.

They sat still for minutes. Presently Lucian's dog stole out from behind the stove, his ears pointed, his eyes fixed. He whined, barked sharply. Karen laughed and got down on the floor beside him. Putting her arms about his neck, she kissed the dog squarely on the brow, then drew back a little and looked at him thoughtfully.

"He has sly ears—and he has sly eyes—and he sees and hears what we can't surmise!" she said softly.

Lucian chuckled to himself and would have spoken had the door not opened just then to admit Hattie and Peter Strand. While Hattie removed her coat and shawl, Peter warned Karen that they must be getting home at once. The girl got to her feet regretfully and put on her things. The dog stretched, yawned and went back to his place behind the stove.

Good nights were called and the Strands disappeared into the darkness. Lucian stood watching from the open doorway until a sudden swirl of snow was driven across the kitchen floor. He closed the door quickly and followed Hattie, who had taken the lamp from the table and was already half-way up the stairs.

THE marriage of Lucian Dorrit and Hattie Murker had stirred Loyola as had few other events in the history of the district. Notwithstanding all the speculation and jesting, however, a native shyness, born, doubtless, of an unconscious self-respect, was a bridle to the most impatient curiosity, and Hattie and Lucian were left to themselves for the most part during the early weeks of their married life.

In every community, however, someone invariably provides the exception. In Loyola the exception was Mrs. Blundell, wife of him who presided daily over the lunch-counter that stood next to Melham's store. While there were men in Loyola who would have learned of the sudden death of Mrs. Blundell with unconcealed elation, there were women in the town who blessed her name and made their shopping tours to the cities twice a year in the full confidence that their husbands would not abuse their freedom during their absence. A husband moves cautiously under a vigilant eye. And there was little that escaped the sharp eye of Mrs. Blundell, in town or out of it.

A neighborly visit to Agatha Dorrit just a fortnight after the wedding of Hattie and Lucian had repaid Mrs. Blundell poorly



**C** "I wanted to have something to look forward to in the future," Hattie told Doctor Muller. "And when Luce Dorrit came to me, I took him."

enough for her pains. She had worn her hard, bowler-shaped, white satin hat with the white plumes stylishly on the side and she had driven out in her smart black cutter on an afternoon of nipping frost. She had stayed long enough to have Mrs. Dorrit tell her that Hattie was a strong, good woman and that Luce had done mighty well. She had returned to town a bit crestfallen and disappointed, but more determined than ever.

She had let a decent two weeks slip by before she drove north again, this time to visit Hattie herself. She was none the less jaunty, alert and all-perceiving, although the end of her slightly pointed nose had been bitten by frost along the way. Hattie heartened her with coffee and layer-cake beside the bulging heater in the dining-room.

"Well, well, and how does it feel to be cooking and washing and mending for another man, Hattie, and doing as much of the outside work as ever, I suppose?" she plunged as soon as she had shaken a little of the chill from her spare body. "I'd think it'd just about wear a woman out—and you've been used to having no one round but Bert to look after."

Hattie's face was calm, unperturbed by the fine-edged observation of her visitor.

"No, Mrs. Blundell," she replied, "Lucian doesn't let me get tired out. He takes care of the outside work himself. I've got only the housework now. There ain't many like Luce Dorrit."

The visitor bit her lip. She might have been thinking of Joe Blundell just then. "I guess you're right, Hattie," she said, "though I did think poor Ben would have made you a good husband."

Hattie winced a little in spite of herself. She drew herself up, smoothing her hair back over her ear. "I thought so, too—once. But I guess that wasn't to be. It makes me think that

the right marriages are made in Heaven—and that's what Luce thinks, too."

"But you did it all so sudden, like."

"I would 'a' waited a while, but Luce wanted it to be right soon." She clasped her hands tightly in her lap. "I'm glad he had his way about it."

"Of course, there's not many girls that could 'a' had their pick of the young men like you, Hattie. But how does Bert like the new arrangement?"

Hattie smiled. "Bert likes anything I do. And besides, he always liked Luce. Everything is going to get along fine between them."

The conversation was proceeding rather jerkily, but Mrs. Blundell was not the woman to retire from the field without at least a sharp skirmish. She had been looking about the room, taking mental notes.

"Well," she smiled genially, "I must say you have a real nice place to begin your married life in, Hattie. It ain't many girls that are so *fortch'nit*. My, what lovely rag rugs them are!"

"Yes, it's comfortable enough here. And it's plenty big enough just now. We'll be building in a year or so."

"Going to build?" Mrs. Blundell's eyes were very wide.

"Yes. Stone."

"Oh!"

"Yes," Hattie said as she settled back reflectively in her chair. "Luce and I think people oughtn't to be married unless they want children. The house is too small for more than just us and Bert. Luce and I were talking it over just last night. We'll use the stone from our own quarry. It's more lasting than wood or brick—and we'll be needing it for a long time to come."

"You will, indeed, if your plans work out."

"We are going to make them work out, (Continued on page 179)



# 3 Wise Men

## of the East Side



WHILE he was in the death-house Tony Scarra did a lot of thinking. You couldn't imagine a better place for thinking; it goes on practically all the time there, and intensively. But no matter where the thoughts range and no matter what elements enter into them—hope or despair, desperation or resignation, or whatever—sooner or later they fly back, like dark homing pigeons, to a small iron door opening upon a room in which there is a chair with straps dangling from its arms and from its legs and its head-rest—in short, the Chair. This picture is the beginning and the end of all the thinking that is done in the death-house.

Such were the facts with regard to Tony Scarra. As nearly as might be judged, he felt no remorse for the murdering which had brought him to his present trapped estate. But he did have a deep regret for the entanglement of circumstances responsible for his capture and conviction. And constantly he had a profound sense of injustice. It seemed to him that in his case the law had been most terribly unreasonable. Statistics showed that for every seventy-four homicides committed in this state only one person actually went to the Chair. He'd read that in a paper during the trial. It had been of some comfort to him. Now he brooded on these figures. Over and over and over again, brooding on them, he asked himself about it.

Why should he have to be the unlucky one of seventy-four? Was it fair to let seventy-three other guys go free or let them off with prison sentences and then shoot the whole works to him? Was that a square deal? Why did it have to be that way, anyhow? What was the sense of it? Why pick on him? Why must he go through with it? Why—that was just it—why? The question-marks were so many sharp fishhooks all pricking down into his brain and hanging on.

His calling had made a sort of fatalist out of Tony Scarra. His present position was in a fair way to make a sort of anarchist out of him.

All the way through his lawyer kept trying to explain to him touching on the lamentable rule of averages. He was not concerned with averages though. He was concerned with the great central idea of saving his life. To that extent his mind had become a lopsided mind. Its slants all ran the same way, like shingles on a roof that slopes.

At length there came a morning when the death-house seemed to close in on him, tighter and tighter. It no longer was a steel box to enclose him; it became a steel vise and pinched him. This Scarra was not what you would call an emotional animal, nor a particularly imaginative one. Even so, and suddenly, he saw those bolt-heads in the ironwork as staring unmerciful eyes all vigilantly cocked to see how he took the news. And his thinking, instead of being scattered, now came to a focus upon a contingency which through weeks past he had carried in the back lobe.

"I'm just as sore about this as you are, Tony," the lawyer said. "It hurts me almost as much as it hurts you. Why, look here, yours is the first case I ever lost—the first capital case, I mean. All the others, I got 'em off somehow—acquittal or a hung jury or a mistrial or a retrial or, if it looked bad, we took a plea in the second degree and the fellow went up the road for a stretch.

It's my reputation that's at stake in this thing; this thing is bound to hurt my record—the conviction standing and all. So naturally, not only on my own account but on yours, I've done everything I could—claiming reversible errors and taking an appeal and now this last scheme of asking the judges to reopen the case on the ground of newly discovered evidence. We've fought it along with stays and delays for nearly eight months now, going all the way up to the highest court in the state, and here today I have to come up here and tell you we've been turned down there. It's hard on me, don't forget that, Tony. It'll hurt me in New York. You know what your crowd call me there—the Technicality Kid?"

*The sentry must watch,  
but he might not listen.*

"You was recommended to me as one swell mouthpiece and I sent for you and you came up and I hired you," answered Scarra in a recapitulation of vain grievances, "and you took my jack and you kept on taking it till you milked me clean, pretty near it, and now you stand there and tell me you're through!"

"No, I'm not through either," the lawyer made haste to say. "There's still the chance that the Governor may commute the sentence. You know how often that happens—men being reprieved right at the very last minute, as you might say. Oh, I'm going to the Governor next. We've still got nearly a month left, Tony, and a lot could happen in a month."

"Swell chance I've got with this Governor, and you know it. He's a politician, ain't he? Can't you see these here rube papers riding him if he should let off the 'Big City Gunman'? Ain't that their gentlest name for me? No, you quit stalling and listen to me a minute."

There was a tight, strong iron grill between them; they talked with each other through the meshes, and as they talked a keeper watched them, keeping beyond earshot, though. All the same, Scarra followed the quite unnecessary precaution of sinking his voice before saying what next he had to say.

"Finburg," he whispered, "I ain't going to let these guys cook me. I'm going to beat their game yet—and you're going to help me." He twisted his mouth into the stiffened shape of a grin; the embalmed corpse of a grin. "Get that?—you're going to help me."

Counselor Finburg had eloquent shoulders. Often in debate he used them to help out his pleading hands. He lifted both of them in a shrug of confessed helplessness. Nevertheless his expression invited further confidences. It was as much as to say that this was a poor unfortunate friend who, having a delusion, must be humored in it.

"Don't start that stuff with me," went on Scarra, correctly interpreting the look; "not till you've heard what I got to tell you.

# By Irvin S. Cobb

Illustrations by  
W. D. Stevens

Finburg, if I got to croak, I got to croak, that's all. I took plenty chances in my time on being bumped off and I've seen more'n one guy getting his—what I mean, more'n one besides that hick cop that I fixed his clock for him. If it hadn't been for him I wouldn't been here. But that ain't the main thing. The main thing is that I ain't going let 'em make cold meat out of me in that kitchen of theirs out there. I'll beat 'em to it, that's all. I couldn't stand it, that's all."

"They say it's absolutely—you know"—Mr. Finburg's lips were reluctant to form the word—"well, painless—and, of course, instantaneous."

"Who says so? A bunch of wise-cracking doctors, that's who. What do they know about it? Any of them ever try it to find out? Finburg, I had a brother and he knew about electricity—was a lineman for a high-tension power company. I've heard him tell about being caught in them currents; heard him tell what other guys went through that caught a big jolt of the juice. The first shock don't always put a guy out. He may look to be dead but he ain't—he's stuck there waiting for the next shot—waiting, waiting. Well, not for me—I'm going to do my own croaking—with a little help from outside. And that's where you figure in."

Involuntarily, Finburg made as if to back away. His body shrank back but his feet rooted him fast. A fascination held him.

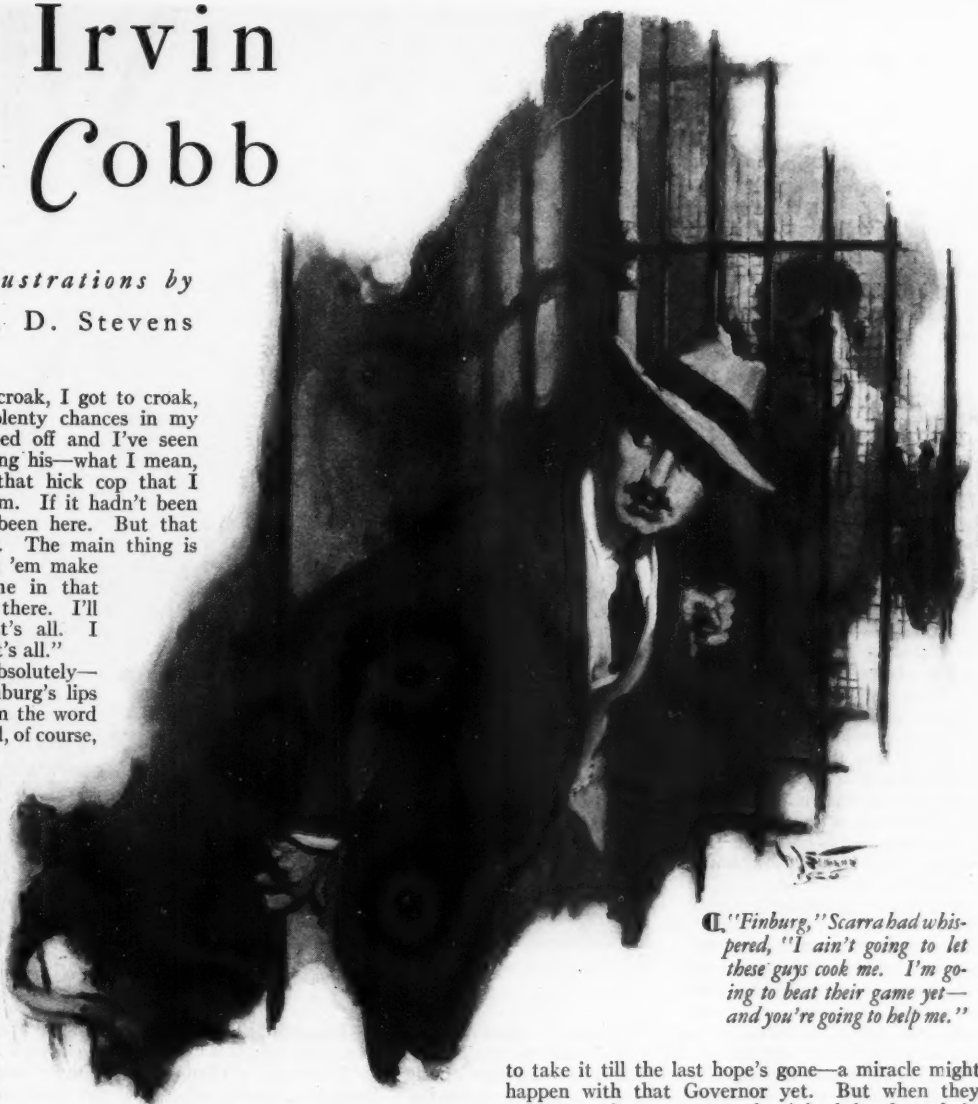
"You ain't going to lose anything by it," maintained the caged man, pressing his point. "You're going to make by it."

"No, no, no!" Finburg strove to make his dissent emphatic. "Oh, no, Scarra, I'd like to do you any favor in my power but I couldn't do that. Why, man, it's against the law. It's conniving at a suicide. It makes the man who does it an accessory."

"Swell law that wants to croak a poor guy and yet calls it a crime if somebody helps him croak himself!" commented Scarra. "Still, I know about that part of it already. What if I tell you you ain't running any risk? And what if you clean up on the deal yourself? You've been knocking holes in the law ever since you got your license. Why're you weakening now?"

"But—but if you're determined to go this way, why not use something in your cell—some utensil, say?" suggested the nervous Finburg. Already he felt guilty. His cautious voice had a guilty quaver in it.

"With them bringing me my grub already cut up and only a spoon to eat it with—*huh!*" the murderer grunted. "Why, even the tooth-brush they gave me has got a limber handle on it. Anyhow, I ain't craving to make a messy job of it. I'm going clean and I'm going quick. What I want is just a nice little jolt of this here cyanide of potassium. You know about that stuff? You swallow it and it's all over in a minute. That's what I want—one little shot of that cyanide stuff. I ain't going



C. "Finburg," Scarra had whispered, "I ain't going to let these guys cook me. I'm going to beat their game yet—and you're going to help me."

to take it till the last hope's gone—a miracle might happen with that Governor yet. But when they come to take me out to be juiced in that chair,

why, down goes the little pill and out goes Tony, laughing in their foolish faces. I ain't scared to go my way, you understand, but"—he sucked in his breath—"but I'm scared to go their way and I might as well admit it."

Still on the defensive and the negative, Finburg had been shaking his head through this, but his next speech belied his attitude. Being rent between two crossed emotions—a sinking fear for his own safety, a climbing, growing avarice—he said in a soft, wheedling tone: "You mentioned just now about my making something out of—this? Not that I'd even consider such a dangerous proposition," he added hastily. "I—I just wanted to know what you had on your mind, that's all."

"I thought that'd interest you! Listen, Finburg. All along, I've been holding out on you. I been keeping an ace in the hole in case we should lose out on the appeal. You thought you'd taken the last cent of fall-money I could dig up for fighting my case for me, didn't you? Well, kid, you went wrong there. You remember the big Bergen Trust Company hold-up down in New Jersey early last spring, don't you?"

"Yes." Finburg's jaws relaxed the least bit to let a greedy tongue lick out.

"Then you remember, probably, that quite a chunk of negotiable securities—bonds and things—wasn't never recovered?"

"Yes, I recall." Finburg suggested a furtive jackal, tense with a mounting hunger and smelling afar off a bait of rich but forbidden food.

"And that the trust company people offered a reward of ten thousand for the return of that stuff and no questions asked?"

"Yes, go on."

"Well, Finburg, you're smart but here's something you never knew before. I was in on that hold-up—I engineered it. And

inside of three weeks afterwards, while I was waiting for the squawk over that job to die down, I came up here and got in this jam and had to plug this cop and they nailed me with the goods. But, Finburg, I've got a safe-deposit box in a bank on Third Avenue and I've got a key to it stuck away in another place where a pal's keeping it for me—a pal I can trust. I'll leave you guess what's in that safe-deposit box. Or, if you want me to, I'll tell—"

"No, don't tell me—that would be illegal," said the lawyer very uneasily and yet very eagerly. "It would be more regular, you understand, if I didn't actually have knowledge of what the contents were—that is, beforehand. I've been double-crossed before by some of you hard-boiled people. There was the time when I almost worked my head off defending Roxie McGill and her mob for shoving phony money, and every time I think of how that McGill skirt slipped it over on me, when it came time to settle up—he winced on what plainly was a most painful recollection—"well, it's made me careful, Tony, awfully careful. Not that I'm doubting you, understand. If a man can't trust a—" He broke off, looking, for him, a trifle embarrassed.

"Say it!" prompted Scarra grimly. "If you can't trust a dying man you can't trust nobody—that's what you had in your mind, wasn't it? Well, I'm as good as dead right now and you won't never regret it, playing my game. It could be fixed up, according to law, couldn't it, like a will, that me not having any kinfolks, I was leaving you what was in that safe-deposit box on account of you having been my lawyer and having worked so hard for me?"

"Oh, yes, I'd know how to phrase the instrument properly. There'd be no trouble about that, none whatever, Tony."

"All right, then, you fix up the paper and I'll sign it right here any day it's ready. And I'll give you a written order on that pal of mine for the key, telling him to hand it over to you the day after I'm gone. You ain't got a thing to worry about. And in payment all you got to do for me is just the one little favor of getting that little pill made up and—"

"I'm telling you there's entirely too much risk," interrupted Finburg, in a timorous sweat of almost overpowering temptation, but still clinging to safety. "I wouldn't dare risk trying to slip you poison, Tony—I couldn't."

"Nobody's asking you to."

"What? What's that you're saying, Tony?" The lawyer had his peaked nose between two wattles of the steel grill.

"I say, nobody's asking you to. Knowing you, I've doped out that part of it so you won't have to take a chance. Listen, Finburg—there's a guard here in this place named Isgrid—a Swede or something. And he comes from down on the East Side, the same as you and me. I've been working on him. We've got friendly. Maybe him and me both having been born on the same block over there beyond the Bowery was what made him sort of mushy towards me—he's one of those big thick slobbs. But it ain't for friendship only that he's willing to help. He wants his bit out of it. He's aiming to quit this job he's got here and he wants to take a piece of money with him when he quits. Now, here's what he tells me: He'll be on the death-watch on me. That last night he'll slip me the pill, see? Nobody ain't going to suspect him, he says, and even if anybody does, they ain't going to be able to hang it on him, let alone get you mixed in with the plant."



“One of the capsules has a spot of red ink on it,” the lawyer

"I suppose I'll have to see this man," conceded Finburg; "not that that means I'm committing myself to this undertaking."

"I thought of that too. Day after tomorrow is Sunday, and Sunday is his day off. He'll run down to New York and meet you in your office or at your flat, and you can size him up and talk it over with him."

"It can't do any harm to see the man, I suppose." It was plain that the lawyer was convincing himself. "Tell him—only, mind you, this is just an accommodation to you—tell him the address of my rooms and tell him to be there at ten o'clock."

"One thing more," stated the killer. "Isgrid wants one grand for his cut."

"One grand—a thousand dollars!"

"That's his lowest price. I had to work on him to cut it down to that. And, Finburg, you'll have to dig up the thou'. He wants it in advance, see? You can pay yourself back—afterwards. That's up to you."

"That makes it still more complicated," lamented the wavering Finburg. "I don't know—I don't know." Figuratively he wrung his hands in an anguish born of desire and doubt.

"Well I'll give you till over Sunday to make up your mind, then," said Scarra, he secretly being well content with the progress that had been made. "If by Monday you've decided to go through with your share of the deal, you can come back here and bring that paper with you and I'll sign it. If you don't show up on Monday I'll know you're too chicken-hearted for your own good. Remember this, though, Finburg—one way or another I'm going to get that pill. If you don't want to help, that's your lookout—you'll only be kissing good-bye to what's down in them safe-deposit vaults on Third Avenue. And if you do—well, I guess you're wise enough to protect yourself at every angle. It's easy pickings for you, Finburg—easy pickings. So think it over before you decide to say no. Well, so long, see you Monday."

He fell back from the grating and to the keeper at the farther end of the corridor motioned to indicate that his interview with





told Isgrid. "It's marked so a fellow will be wised up to handling it carefully."

his counsel was ended and that he was ready to be taken back to his cell.

Monday morning, good and early, Mr. Finburg was back again. His mind had been made up for many hours. In fact it was made up before he left on Friday afternoon. Only, at the time he had not cared to say so or to look so. To wear a mask was one part of Mr. Finburg's professional attitude. To do things deviously was another. For him always, the longest way round was the shortest way across.

It was because of this trait of Mr. Finburg's that certain preliminary steps in the working-out of his share in the plot were elaborated and made intricate. Since Friday evening when his train landed him at the Grand Central, he had been a reasonably busy young man. From the station he went directly to the Public Library and there, at a table well apart from any other reader, he consulted a work on toxicology, with particular reference to the effects of the more deadly poisons. Before midnight he was in touch with a chemist of his acquaintance who served as laboratory sharp and chief mixer for a bootlegging combine specializing in synthetic goods with bogus labels on them. His real purpose in this inquiry was, of course, carefully cloaked; the explanation he gave—it referred to experiments which a purely supposititious client was making with precious metals—apparently satisfied the expert, who gave information fully.

By virtue of a finely involved ramification of underworld connections, Mr. Finburg was enabled next to operate through agents. Three separate individuals figured in the transaction. But no one of the three came to know more than his particular link in a winding chain and only one of the three had direct dealings with the principal, and this one remained in complete ignorance of what really was afoot. All he knew, all he cared to know, was that having been dispatched on a mission which seemed to start nowhere and lead nowhere, he had performed what was expected of him and had been paid for it and was through. By these roundabout steps, by such deft windings in and out, Mr. Finburg

satisfied himself that the trail was so broken that no investigator ever could piece it together. There were too many footprints in the trace; and too many of them pointing in seemingly opposite and contrary directions.

He was quite ready for the man Isgrid when that person came to his apartment on Sunday morning. Whether Isgrid studied Finburg is of no consequence to this narrative, but we may be quite assured that Finburg studied Isgrid, seeing the latter as a stolid, dull person, probably of Scandinavian ancestry and undoubtedly of a cheap order of mentality. For the rôle of an unthinking middleman Isgrid seemed an admirable choice in any conspiracy. He had such a dependable dumb look about him. Nevertheless it suited Mr. Finburg's book that his dealings with this man should be marked by crafty play-acting. There sat the two of them, entirely alone, yet Mr. Finburg behaved as though a cloud of witnesses hovered to menace them.

He asked Isgrid various questions—leading questions, they would be called in court—but so phrased that they might pass for the most unsuspecting of inquiries. Then, being well satisfied by the results of such cross-examination, the lawyer came to business.

"Look here," he said, pointing, "on this table is a little box with the lid off. See it? Well, in it are twelve five-grain capsules same as you'd get from any drug-store if you had a touch of

grippe and the doctor gave you a prescription to be filled. Between ourselves we'll just say it is a grippe cure that we've got here. Well, one of these capsules is stronger than the others are. If I'm not mistaken, it's this one here"—his finger pointed again—"the last one in the bottom row, the one with a little spot of red ink on it. It's marked that way so a fellow will be wised up to handling it pretty carefully.

"Now then, I'm going into the next room. I've got a wall safe there where I keep some of my private papers and other valuables, including money. I'm going to get a bill—a nice new United States Treasury certificate for one thousand dollars—out of my safe. It may take me two or three minutes to work the combination and find the bill. When I come back, if one or two of those capsules should happen to be missing, why I'll just say to myself that somebody with a touch of grippe, or somebody who's got a friend laid up somewhere with a touch of grippe, saw this medicine here and helped himself to a dose or so without saying anything about it. It won't stick in my mind; what difference does a measly little drug-store pill or two mean to me or to anybody else, for that matter? Inside of ten minutes I'll have forgotten all about it.

"Make yourself at home, please—I'll be back in a jiffy."

He entered the inner room of the two-room flat, closing and snapping shut the connecting door behind him. When he came back, which was quite soon, he glanced at the open box. The twelfth capsule, that one which was red-dotted, and one neighboring capsule had disappeared. Isgrid was sitting where he had been seated before Finburg's temporary withdrawal.

"See this?" resumed Finburg, and he held up what he was holding in his hands. "It's a nice slick new one that's never been in circulation. Well, I've about made up my mind to slip this bill to you. You've been kind to a party that's in trouble—a party that I've had considerable dealings with. He's grateful and naturally I'm grateful, too. As I understand it, you're going to keep on being good to this party. He's in a bad way—may not live very long, in fact—and we'll both (Continued on page 150)

By Dixie Willson

*A Quite  
Unusual  
Story  
by a  
Quite  
Unusual  
Young  
Woman*

ONCE in New Orleans an old man who kept a public house tried his hand at a float for the Mardi Gras. He made pink paper into a shell, trimmed it with rosettes, put two poles to carry it, sent it in the procession, watched like a preened little cock, brought it back, and where was it then? Up endways in his dooryard with the kindling!

Sailors, with snapping red whips, red plumes, always went to the Mardi Gras, singing, swaggering through the crowd, paper snow, funny masks under sailor hats, rattle boxes, feather sticks. Wherever they were they would come if they could to New Orleans for the Mardi Gras.

And one night among the lanterns, crowds, torches, music, a dozen sailors straggling along, a dozen more behind them, stopped to eat outside a public house, where there were tables on the sidewalk, cake, and chicken to eat in their fingers.

Behind the tables iron pickets marked off a jumbled dooryard. One sailor looked through at the broken chairs, boxes, crooked tails of wire hanging from a rope where lanterns must have been, and up endways, a pink float, a shell trimmed with rosettes.

"Here's a tub trumped up fancy in here," he called out. "Come on, let's help ourselves."

The others peered in, clambered in for the shell, came out with it, got it up on their shoulders, and the sailor who had seen it first climbed in with a sack of buns in his arms, put one on his head for a crown, puffed his cheeks out, and sat among the rosettes grandly—grotesquely, the others making fun, laughing at him with mock applause.

But in the midst of it they saw that instead of playing king, he was looking beyond them, forgetting them, looking at the inn door. They followed his eyes, and in the doorway, the heavy door open, they saw a girl—a slim little thing, short brown curls, skimpy dress, black worn shoes, her face against the darkness of the doorway like a cameo, like a flower somehow. Eighteen she was—or nineteen or twenty.

58



*Over the carnival, in the shell, the sailors lifted that little girl, bewildered, confused. And the sailor who had seen her first never took his eyes away from her.*

They stared at her a minute too; then as if it might have been kaleidoscope discs breaking apart, sailors tumbled in the inn door, came tumbling out again, that sailor with the crown was pulled down by a dozen hands, and up on their shoulders, over the carnival, over themselves, over the scattered tables, into the shell they lifted that little girl—bewildered—confused.

The crowd stopped to see who it was—what was happening. "Here, give her this," somebody said, and reached up a rose. How unconscious we are of what things come to make our lives!

How beyond all our wisdom it is, which *nothing* of a moment is to become the great *everything* finally!

The girl took it, looked into the weaving crowd, then suddenly she laughed, pinned the rose in her hair and from down in the shell where the sailor had left his sack of buns, she began pelting right and left—laughing at everyone, pelting soft, crusty buns. The sailors blustered and cheered—shoved ahead through the people—carried her on down the street, eyes glowing, lips laughing, face eerie in the torchlight.

And that sailor who had seen her first never took his eyes away from her. He got himself near her and stayed there as they

# God Gave Me 20 Cents

Illustrations by C. D. Williams

A Sailor,  
A Waif,  
New  
Orleans  
&  
Romance



carried her on and on, singing and shouting. More sailors joined in; other people did too. They gave her pralines, corn sticks and *tamales*—took her on and on; but at last, after midnight, crowds lagging, pit shows over, they put her down with much gusto on the steps of a street fountain, and with that little spray behind her, water trickling over the stone, they filled her pockets with money and her ears with many questions.

Who was she? Where did she live? Had she sweethearts? How many? Did she know the way home? What was her name? What should they call her?

Her name was Mary, she laughed. Yes, she knew the way home. They bought her a doll dressed in tissue, and at last the sailor who'd watched her so closely went home with her through the flickering streets and found out she belonged to no one—had been left at the public house—had become just a little servant there.

He was tall, blond, shambling—hat on the back of his head. She was so little beside him, scarcely up to his shoulder.

She showed him the way to get back where they'd found her, shutters closed now, the place deserted, the street quiet but for a bedraggled couple on a corner, making senseless music with horns, a musette.

And by the inn door he said good-by to her, that doll in her arms, broken streamers around her, moonlight tangled in her hair. He watched her pull the door open, shadows coming to meet her, saw the door close—good-by. Something, nothing—good-by. So much pipe smoke—good-by. So much phosphorous . . .

But all along the wharf streets to the old boarding-house he lived in, and on through the colorless hours of morning, to his

mind would come first that her name was Mary, then her hair with the rose in it, then her hands pelting buns, then her worn shoes, then her eyes in the torchlight, then that her name was Mary, then her hands pelting buns, then her eyes in the torchlight, then her worn shoes, then her hands pelting buns, then her hair with the rose in it—her hair with a rose in it.

And it was like the old man putting his float to be kindling when instead it had come to more glory than ever. The sailor went back.

Mary came out with her little worn shoes, her shy hands, and they went loitering along down old, odd, crooked streets. How simple we are! How simple happiness is! He went there again—went again.

They sat in shabby little parks watching children play.

"Steve, why did you come back?" she asked him once.

He put one arm across the back of the bench, drew her head down to his shoulder.

"Because that night—with that rose," he said, "you were so beautiful I had to come back. I couldn't forget you."

One day he reminded her of it again—said awkwardly she had looked like a bride that night with that rose. He said he wished she *would* be a bride, and the next day they were married—some questions—a clerk of the court, Mary, little skimpy dress, little servant left at a public house, and that tall, shambling sailor who'd stumbled in to the Mardi Gras.

"Well," he laughed, "I've got one girl, all right, now."

After they were married he took her back to the inn till he could get a leave.

"Then I'll come after my little wife for good," he said.

She reached up for his kiss; then suddenly her arms clung around his neck—hot tears, little salty drops against his lips.

"Look, now," he laughed—"some day you can cry, but not so soon! What's the matter—are you sorry already?"





**C** "Heads I go, tails I stay," begged Cassie. "All right, we'll match," said Steve. "Luck never went wrong for me yet."

"I love you—I love you so," she tried to tell him, broken little words. "It's because I love you so."

He was surprised. He never had thought she would love him like this.

Such a quiet little wisp. Such shy hands.

"Don't cry now. I'll bring you a new dress"—he petted her awkwardly; "then I'll show all the boys the little wife I've got."

They found a place to keep house on a second floor, a bakery below, and every day was happier even than the day before it. Mary sang and scrubbed and mended his clothes, and she'd sit

at the window counting hours till he'd come. And when he did come—how glad she was! How she'd tumble into his arms! He would laugh at her—his little wife. He never had thought she would love him like this!

Cassie Lang was put into South Heaton prison for sixty days for picking a man's pocket. She said nothing, asked for nothing when they put her in. While they locked the cell she went over to the far wall and stood watching them. She was like a painted picture there, the bars of the windows streaking shadows across her oval face, her slim body. A picture, not of anything beautiful, but of a stray thing like wreckage washed up on a shore or a seared thing like a weed on the desert.

Her hair was thin and drab, her dress faded brown, brown lace sagging on it, a blue, dingy scarf, worn brocade slippers, the metal turned dull, gold bangles in her ears; but in a pitiful way she was pretty, Cassie Lang, eyes so wide they made her seem ill almost—white skin, plaintive lips.

One day a sailor came to see her, a shuffling, tall, blond sailor, hands in the odd little pockets of his pea-jacket, white hat on the back of his head, hair parted sideways coming down across his forehead. He leaned against the wall outside her cell and crossed one foot over the other. Steve Doren.

Cassie stood close against the bars and talked to him so the others wouldn't hear.

She pulled her hands through into hers.

"When do you ship out again, Steve?" she asked, watching his eyes—that seemed to be thinking maybe one thing about her, maybe another.

"Hongkong next month," he told her, leaning against the wall, one hand through the bars where she held it. "Women going this trip—two Creoles—three or four whites."

She caught his hand against her cheek. "I want to go," she said—quick, short little words. "Take me!"

He looked at her, eyes half closed, seemed to be watching how she'd take his answer. "I've got a wife now," he said.

"Yes," she answered shortly, "but you haven't said good-bye to me."

"I will when I go to Hongkong," he said, meaning maybe one thing, maybe another.

Cassie Lang lived in Yarm Street. Everybody in Yarm Street knew her. Some women spoke to her—some didn't. Men passed her, looked after her, spoke to her or avoided her. In Bigger's Cellar, sailors would sit around over beer and stale food half asleep like old men till she would fling into the midst of them, gold earrings, scarlet lips—start the gambling, start the electric music—keep things going till morning, till candles would burn out and the dish-washer would come, and the place would get cold. She would help them smuggle, and steal and lie—and Bigger would pay her for as many hours as she stayed—the sailors would pay her too, but she hated everybody, she said, except Steve Doren. Steve she would follow—and send for—and ask for.

THE day she got out of prison was the first day of spring—tender and warm. She shivered in the sun, pulled her scarf around her and shivered all the way to where she lived—old Mrs. Tapman's.

Mrs. Tapman was asleep on Cassie's bed, ragged shoes, dressing-jacket, old skirt—fat, breathing out loud.

Cassie sat down in the broken rocker. An hour later when Mrs. Tapman woke, Cassie was sitting there, staring at the floor. "S'help me, Cassie," Mrs. Tapman croaked—"that you?"

Cassie looked up, startled, then dropped her head to her knees and broke into strained sobbing. Mrs. Tapman hurried in alarm across the room and tried to shake her, tried to talk to her, dragged the chair to the bed at last and got Cassie on it, covered her, clothes and all, with a bedquilt, hurried to the kitchen for coffee, and brought a cup of it—black and strong. Cassie pulled herself up against the back of the bed.

"Prison—prison—prison—who thinks I've got out of it!" she choked. "Yarm Street is prison! Bigger's is prison! Steve's going to Hongkong tomorrow and he's got to take me! He's got to take me!" She put her hands over her face—one long, smothered breath. "If you love somebody—that's prison too," she said, her voice bitter with hate—or love.

The next day Steve came and they sat on the steps outside Tapman's—noisy street, people, wagons. He told her he was going at four o'clock.

"But you're going to take me this time, Steve," she said, almost begging.

He told her he'd see her when he came back maybe.

"Steve, let's gamble for it," she pleaded. "Here's some money. Let's match, Steve, to see if you'll take me or not." She opened her fingers and held out some money—pennies—a nickel—two dimes.

"Heads I go, tails I stay, odds we match again," she said, her eyes searching his face.

He didn't answer.

"You gamble for everything, Steve," she said. "You gamble for money, you gamble for ports. You always said gamblers' luck is the right tip." She caught his shoulders and dropped her head against his arm. She put one of the dimes in his hand and closed his fingers over it. "Heads I go, tails I stay, odds we match again," she begged.

"Luck never went wrong for me yet," Steve Doren said with an odd little smile—meaning maybe one thing, maybe another. "All right, we'll match. Heads you go—tails you stay."

On the warped old step they put down their hands covering those dimes that would be the answer—drew the hands away. It was heads!

OVER the bakery Mary watched at the window for Steve. He had said he'd be back when he knew what time his lugger pulled anchor. She looked down into the street—cobblestones, people going back and forth. She opened the window and looked out for a tall sailor, white hat on the back of his head, hands in the odd little pockets of his pea-jacket.

The world is only one thing, after all. You wait for somebody. I for somebody else. Hours, days, happiness made of just one thing—if they come for whom we wait.

The afternoon went on. First Mary watched the clock. Then she didn't dare watch it. Then she didn't dare look in the street any more. She shut her eyes and put her face against the window casing. Nothing could happen to Steve! Nothing would! She put her hands over her eyes. Nothing would! Nothing would!

Push-carts jangled by, peddlers called, wheels rumbled. There came a smell of warm steaming bread from the bakery—smell of *kuichen*. Maybe it was tomorrow he was going, not today. Maybe today he was only waiting down-stairs for *kuichen* because it was Saturday. That was it! It was *tomorrow*, not today! So she hurried and set the table for supper.

A man's step came on the stairs. Steve? No, not Steve. She ran to the door and saw Tom Snuck coming up. Dirty canvas clothes—he loaded freight at the wharves. He lived across the street.

"My wife seen you waitin' for Steve all afternoon," he said, stopping on the stairs when Mary opened the door, "so I thought I'd ought to tell you Steve's gone. And as long's somebody'll tell you if I don't—he took Cassie Lang with him, in case you didn't know he was goin' to. My wife'll be over to set with you after while."

He thumped down-stairs. Mary shut the door. She stood in that room and looked at the walls of it, table, chairs, a sailor's hat on the floor, a sailor's pipe on the table where Steve had put it, the alarm-clock cracking. You can live and die at the same time.

Cassie Lang—gold bangles in her ears; Cassie Lang and all the sailors on Yarm Street—and now Steve!

But Steve *couldn't* go! He hadn't said good-bye! He had to come back for his pipe—his hat! He had to come to say good-bye!

Tom Snuck didn't know! Steve gone with Cassie Lang? Mary could laugh at that. She'd go to the wharf and find Steve and laugh at Tom Snuck. She'd go to the wharf and laugh; but suddenly she was just a broken flower—that clock cracking like torture against her brain. Steve gone—never coming—empty walls—empty rooms—empty days—not even good-bye! She must go to the wharf and find out that Tom Snuck didn't know—didn't know—didn't know—but he *did* know. Well—she would say good-bye out across the ocean to the smoke of Steve's ship, and stay there in the ocean near him. If he would be looking at the ocean where she would be—that would be near him. Maybe people who died in the ocean were sea-gulls following ships. She would follow his ship. Maybe souls that came out of the ocean were sea wind. She would go with him then—everywhere . . .

Mrs. Snuck would be coming. She must hurry! Steve had left no money—she had no money to get to the wharf—but she could find the way.

She ran down-stairs to the street; there were people waiting in the bakery for *kuichen* for Saturday. She hurried past everyone in the crowded market, hurried past people with baskets—roasts, vegetables. How senseless (Continued on page 192)

# C Wolf's Clothing

## *The Story So Far:*

HAVING successfully eluded the police of England and France by assuming the identity of one Johnson Craigie, a man who has been killed in a motor accident, Berry Baline, gentleman crook, boards a steamer for the United States. As Johnson Craigie, Baline determines to live straight, to become the law-abiding citizen he believes Craigie to have been. His idea of Craigie's character is changed when a sailor on the steamer furtively slips him a package—in which he finds a priceless diamond necklace. Craigie, then, must also have been a thief, a go-between taking the necklace to his gang in America. Baline determines to outwit the gang and return the necklace to its rightful owner.

In New York, he manages to slip through the customs inspection with the necklace in his pocket, and to escape the members of the gang who have him under surveillance from the moment he lands. He outfits himself at a shop, discarding Craigie's clothes, and as Wilbert Clarke registers at the Hotel Winsor. Confident that he is safe, he goes to the hotel dining-room where he sees a girl, who, he feels, is the only girl he could ever fall in love with. Just then a waiter brings him a note scrawled on a menu. He has been recognized as Berry Baline and is in grave danger, it states. The waiter tells him that this note was written by the girl who, he learns later, is Rose Bellair.

Baline goes at once to his room but hears voices inside and, fearful of discovery, enters a room across the hall. While he is hiding there the girl comes in, warns him that the hotel is watched and then goes out to join the men who were in his room, leaving him to wonder whether she, too, is a crook, a member of the gang.

Finally he decides that he must make an attempt to get out of the hotel and he rings for a bell-boy. As soon as he appears, Baline knocks him down, gags and trusses him, dons his uniform and goes out into the corridor. A moment later, forgetting his rôle of bell-boy, he fails to use the service elevator and is brought to the bell captain for correction by a hotel clerk. To Baline's surprise, the bell captain proves to be one of the gang and, thinking that Baline is a new man sent in by the Chief, lends him a suit of clothes. Once again Baline is free.

Entering a quiet eating place, he seats himself at a table with a girl who rouses his interest. She tells him her name is Minnie Humphrey and that she is down on her luck. Baline at length persuades her to let him pay her board bill and lend her enough money to get to her home in Boston that night. As soon as the girl has departed Baline telephones the Winsor, giving the number of the room in which he had left the bell-boy. A woman's voice answers—the voice of the girl, Rose. Again she warns him to keep away but a man's voice cuts in telling Baline that unless he comes around to the hotel Rose will suffer.



*Illustrations by John La Gatta*

Baline realizes that he must obey that command, but first he goes to the station to meet Minnie Humphrey. He tells her of his predicament, entrusts the necklace to her and instructs her to go to a small hotel, where she is to register as Mrs. Peter Parker and to remain in her room until he telephones her. Then he goes at once to the Winsor—and comes face to face with the



*A Novel of  
Love  
and  
Intrigue  
by  
Arthur  
Somers  
Roche*



*"I'm the man who tossed a package  
into your lap," I wrote to Parsons,  
and gave the note to the office girl.*

chief of the gang. Rose is being held prisoner and the Chief demands the return of the necklace as the price of her safety and Baline's. Baline consents to go after the necklace, but when he inquires at the hotel for his wife the clerk tells him that no Mrs. Parker has registered, nor is there a Miss Humphrey in the hotel.

Baline curses the simplicity that led him to trust Minnie, for he feels that another girl's life may be the forfeit of that trust.

“YOUR girl gave you the slip.”

To me there is no insolence comparable to that displayed by clerks in second-rate hotels, although I must concede that the cigar-store salesman and the soda-water jerker are tied for second place. And the insolence

of the man whose jeering words still rang in my ears was the more grating because of its basis of truth.

Berry Baline, the wisest crook that ever trimmed a come-on, had been victimized by a red-headed gamin who wasn't clever enough to land a job as extra in a motion-picture studio. Berry Baline, who knew human nature as no professor of psychology could ever know it, whose knowledge was empirical and sure, had been unable to read a girl who had been saved, perhaps, from being a street wench by himself.

It didn't do to tell myself that I'd been forced to rely on the honesty of

Minnie Humphrey. I'd wanted to rely on her; I'd thought that common gratitude—what fools we are to couple those two words together; as though gratitude were ever common!—would make Minnie Humphrey play the hand I dealt her.

The necklace, as a necklace, was immaterial. Had this girl whom I had rescued from starvation and a park bench—or worse—merely managed to get the jewels away from me, I could have summoned my crook philosophy to my aid. I could have told myself that there were other jewels in the world; I could have

grasped at the thought that what had been stolen from me could be regained.

But the necklace was not merely loot which would be transmuted into—well, I do not wish to sloop over in this recital, yet the necklace had come to be a symbol of salvation, almost; but it was not merely that. It had become a definite ransom whereby I could rescue the girl Rose from the Chief. And that rescue was an obligation more compelling than the saving of my soul.

For Rose had stepped into danger because of me. It didn't matter that I was unable to fathom her reasons for interest in me. The facts were that she had sent me a note of warning, the warning had been discovered, and the second time my eyes lighted upon the girl who was, according to my way of thinking, the loveliest thing I'd ever seen, she had been bound and gagged, was apparently in danger of her life.



*In three hours, I learned, I might be admitted to the ward. I parted with ten dollars and was led to Minnie.*

And I, knowing by her word of warning over the telephone that she was in danger, had deliberately jeopardized her further by trusting Minnie Humphrey. Well, I deserved the jeer of the pimply-faced night clerk at the Bennings. If he could know how completely justified his worldly-wise sneer was, he would stroke his tiny black mustache with even greater complacency.

I wondered if some follower of the Chief were staring at me now, puzzled at my inaction. When I had left the Winsor I'd not cared if I were trailed; beaten, it only remained for me to fetch the necklace to the hotel, relying on the Chief's word—which Rose had assured me was good—that the girl and I might depart. Whither we'd go had not entered into my thoughts; but now,

having been duped completely, I bitterly wondered where I might have taken her, where she would have been willing to go with Berry Baline. Probably she'd have stepped out of my life as suddenly as she'd entered it. But this was useless repining, the silliest sort of mental meandering.

Rose was in danger more menacing than half an hour ago when I'd hoped to free her. That I was also in ever-increasing peril mattered little. I was in the open street, armed with an automatic. I could take care of myself. Physically, at least; but mentally—I was a babe in the woods, an utter incompetent.

Oh, I didn't stand there ten minutes committing the blunder of the failure—moaning over spilt milk. There were ways out, and

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one of them instantly occurred to me. I could telephone the police, have the room at the Winsor raided . . . Of course, if the Chief were captured, my own continued existence in the land of the living would be revealed. Instead of rejoicing that Berry Baline was dead, the police would earnestly endeavor to put Berry Baline in a place where he'd be as good as dead. This didn't matter; witless though I'd proved myself with regard to Minnie Humphrey, I'd not be such a fool as regarded the police.

But the Chief had shown himself a master of resource. If there were nothing more than the manner of my tracing to go upon, I could rest assured that he would not wait quietly in the Winsor to be captured. He might be there if I returned, but if plainclothes men entered the hotel, the Chief would depart. Of that I could be certain. The vastness of his organization, the fact that I suspected more than one member of the hotel staff to be in his employ, were proof enough of that.

Moreover, I did not yet know where Rose stood. If she were a criminal turned against her leader, a police visitation might be embarrassing to her. Despite the sweet serenity of her lovely eyes, what had I to go upon save that she was the associate of thieves? Beauty does not mean purity. For aught I knew she might be the most desperate crook of all the gang. Indeed, of her desperation I'd had ample proof; of her crookedness I had strong enough suspicion.

OF COURSE, there was another way out. I could enter the hotel, proceed to the room where the Chief complacently awaited me, and try to shoot a path to freedom for the girl and myself. This way I dismissed at once. Not through fear, but because of its utter hopelessness. Suppose I did manage to overcome the three men—at least—whom I knew to be in that room? What then? Could I hope to leave the hotel, accompanied by the girl, when the whole building would have been aroused by the struggle?

The police, then, could not be called in; force could not be relied upon. Remained only the thing which had made me the success I'd been, my mother-wit.

But no champion chess-player, confronted by an utterly unique move on the part of his opponent; no general whose troops had been outnumbered and outmaneuvered; no statesman pitting his wit against a combination which held all the advantages, was in a more difficult position than I.

Bluff I thought of, but instantly abandoned the thought. I had gleaned enough of the character of the Chief to know that no matter what tale I told him, he would not permit me to take the girl away. Indeed, if I went to him without the necklace, he would not suffer me to depart again, even alone. He would scent the falsity of any explanation I offered, might even guess that I had lost possession—or control—of the diamonds, and would, at the very least, detain me.

How use what wit was left in my bewildered brain, then? I walked slowly east, in the general direction of the Winsor. Behind me, I could guess, followed at least one member of the gang. But that did not disturb me now. When I had a plan, a general plan of action, it would be time enough to think of specific details such as getting rid of the gentleman who must be trailing me.

Now, it was obvious that I could not overcome the Chief's gang by myself. The best I could hope to do would be to overcome one of the gang, or part of the gang. A good general, opposed to a superior force, tries to split up the enemy, so that he can fight one part at a time. But sometimes the good general has good spies, who inform him of the enemy intention to divide, which saves the good general from wearing out his brains in the effort to accomplish the division.

A spy in the enemy camp means a weakness on the part of the enemy. If I only had a spy . . . But an informer need not necessarily be willing; unwilling aid may be as valuable as aid freely proffered. If I could learn something of the gang, its headquarters, its membership . . .

I knew three of the gang now, the Chief, the fat man and the short, squat chap. But they were hardly weak links in the chain, hardly ones from whom I could glean information. Still, there was a fourth man who had some sort of connection with the crew who had stolen the necklace, and this was the bell-captain. Probably he played only a minor part, but even chorus men know what the principals are doing. If he could be compelled to talk . . .

I quickened my pace, and as I crossed Madison Avenue, leaving the Winsor behind me, I knew that the man who followed me must have his suspicions thoroughly awakened by now. My lingering outside the Bennings must have made him suspect that all was not well, and now that it was obvious that I was certainly not taking the necklace to the Winsor by the most direct route,

I could imagine that bewilderment was giving way to certainty in his mind.

But that could not be helped; if the hope that had suddenly blossomed in my heart were justified, I would be prepared to deal with this man who, I was certain, followed me. If that hope were not justified, well—I'd cross the bridge when the road came to it.

I entered the Grand Central Station. It was the third time I'd been in the great structure since I'd landed from the Gollin earlier today—or yesterday. Thieves—I will not mince words—are necessarily self-conscious. I wondered if I'd been noticed, if it would be observed that the man who entered this building once in the well-cut habiliments of Johnson Craigie, had reappeared twice in the raiment of Third Avenue. Well, that was one of the many things that could not be helped.

I went directly to the men's waiting-room; it was deserted, save for a sleepy colored porter who, drowsing on a chair, hardly glanced my way. I tore off the coat I wore and glanced at the neck-band. The name of the maker told me nothing important. I wanted the name of the owner, and the owner's address.

Naturally, I found neither. I might have known that bell-boys who are doubling in crime, so to speak, are not likely to carry on their persons means of identification of which they cannot quickly rid themselves. The wee bud of hope had failed to blossom; instead, it had withered before a petal could unfold.

So I did the only thing that remained to be done—I went to a telephone and called up the Winsor, and was connected with the Chief's room. His own venomous, silky voice spoke to me.

"Baline," I said shortly.

"Well?" he demanded.

"I can't deliver the necklace now," I said.

"The double-cross?" he sneered. "A lady's safety means little to you, eh?"

"I haven't it," I said shortly.

"So? Then where is it?" he asked.

"I'd be likely to tell you, wouldn't I?" I scoffed.

"You're likely to do almost anything, Mr. Baline," he retorted. "What is the idea? Dickering for better terms?"

"I don't break my word," I told him. "I simply can't deliver now."

"But later?" he purred.

"I hope so," I assured him.

"And if not?"

"We'll discuss that later," I said.

"Indeed not," he objected. "I'd like your further word, Mr. Baline. You are not to go to—shall I say, with deference to the possible listener-in, our mutual enemies?"

"That is understood," I said.

"And, Mr. Baline, the position of the lady is—the same. When you return the necklace—she leaves, and so do you. But that promise holds good for no indefinite period. You come to me within twelve hours, with or without the necklace, or—" He stopped, and the purr of his voice was no kitten sound, but the angry purr of a tiger.

"Do you mean you'll exchange? If I come now, the lady may leave?"

"Unfortunately, my word is always good," he replied. "I can make no such promise. But, unless you come within twelve hours, be assured of this—the lady will not leave."

I HUNG up. There was no more to be said, no argument to be advanced. I had twelve hours. If, within that time, I regained the necklace, I could exchange it for my own safety and that of Rose. If I had not recovered the jewels, I could surrender myself as an extra added sacrifice to the wrath of the Chief. I would not serve Rose by such surrender, but—could I remain hidden because surrender would do no good? I knew perfectly well that I could not. I must meet with her the danger that threatened her or—feel no more a man.

But I had twelve hours. Little enough, but—something. But before I could think, could plan a way out of as difficult a situation as had ever confronted me, or any other crook, I must rid myself of the espionage which most certainly surrounded me.

I had been able to elude the Chief's adherents for a while today. True, they had found me later, but for a few hours I had been free from prying eyes. What man has done can be done again. I dodged into the subway, left at Fourteenth Street, taxied across town, took the L up-town, and alighted at Forty-second Street again, convinced that I had thrown any pursuit off my trail. I am, rather naturally, quite adept at this sort of thing.

I was tired; excitement is the most exhausting thing in the world; moreover, it was late. I needed, desperately, a few hours'



sleep. Wits that had become dulled by too many events might be sharpened by slumber. Anyway, what could I do now, at around two in the morning, but sleep? I hadn't an idea what my next move ought to be, and the longer I kept awake the less coherently would my brain function.

I found, on Sixth Avenue, a shabby place that had once been a saloon, with rooms above. The saloon may or may not have been carrying on as in the brave days of old, but the rooms were. I obtained one without the formality of registering, gave the wizened old man who rented me the chamber a dollar on condition that he promised to call me at six, promised him another dollar if he made good, and tumbled wearily into a bed which offered little of comfort and less of cleanliness. But crooks are frequently as choiceless as beggars.

I have one gift, the gift without which no crook can be successful. I am able to go to sleep almost instantly. Without this gift my nerves would have been shot to pieces years ago. And tonight was no exception to my general rule. With my borrowed garments piled neatly upon a chair, the automatic pistol reposing handily upon them, I closed my eyes.

My wizened old man was true to his promise or to his need of the extra dollar promised him. At six he awakened me, and at a quarter past six I was seated in a barber's chair having my chin scraped. At six-thirty I paused at a news-stand, bought a morning paper, and a moment later entered a cheap restaurant.

I ordered a good breakfast, and, while the waiter went away to fill my order, I opened the newspaper. On the front page was a head-line that caught my swift attention.

#### HOTEL THIEVES ESCAPE FROM WINSER

At two-thirty this morning the police were summoned by the management of the Winsor Hotel to effect the capture of a group of criminals supposed to be living in the hotel. The management's suspicions were aroused, it is said, by the appearance of a strange man in bell-boy's uniform. The clerk who saw the man, spoke to him, but was assured by the bell-captain that the man was a new employee. On inquiry, the clerk learned from the personnel manager that no new bell-boy had been engaged in the past fortnight. By the time this was ascertained the bell-captain had left for the night, but the management learned that earlier in the evening the captain had given the impostor a suit of his clothes in which the alleged bell-boy had left the hotel.

It was also discovered that another bell-boy had answered a call to a room and not returned. The house detective found the boy tied and gagged, in a bedroom which was part of a suite. Invading the next room, the detective found it vacant; there were signs of hurried flight, a woman's wrap and several other articles of feminine wear having been left behind in two suitcases.

The police are at work on the case, and it is believed that a robbery of magnitude has been frustrated by the alertness of the clerk.

I digested this article slowly. Of course, the news must have been telephoned to the paper just before the last morning edition went to press. Still, the police had been extremely reticent. It was possible, of course, that the Chief had never entered the



"Rose may—die— if I don't return that necklace," I said. "And you

room in which I had slugged the unfortunate bell-boy to unconsciousness. But this was doubtful. Probably while I had been conversing with the leader of the gang, the Chief had known all about my method of escape from the hotel. He was not one to waste time discussing my achievements; he would be verbose only in creating a picture of himself.

Now, if he had discovered the boy, he might or might not have released him. Probably he would not. The boy's story would have caused investigation and I knew from personal experience that the presence of the police is undesired by criminals even though the latter are not criminally engaged at the moment.

But the Chief would have had no particular reason for entering Rose's bedroom. I'd thrust the boy behind the bed when I left him; he could make no sound which would attract attention to his unfortunate plight. I'd not intended to leave him there indefinitely, of course, but I'd been sure that he'd be discovered before serious harm came to him, and my certainty had been justified.

Suppose, then, that the Chief had not discovered the boy until after my last telephone conversation with him? He'd know that the continued absence of the boy would lead to investigation. I nodded slowly. The Chief had not discovered the gagged and bound victim of my right-hand punch until after I'd had my last talk with him; then he'd left instantly, taking Rose with him.

I wondered how he'd managed to take her from the hotel. Surely, if she chose to resist . . .



move in any direction, apparently. That is, any direction that had reference to Rose, or the Chief, or the necklace.

The waiter interrupted my hopeless reverie. He set before me fruit and coffee and eggs of most recent birth, he assured me. I ate them slowly, and turned in desperation again to the newspaper. Reading—and trying to think—of other matters might shake my bewildered wits into order.

Idly I scanned the head-lines; during the past twenty-four hours there had been five bandit outrages. Isolated deeds, apparently, but I wondered, as I'd wondered many times in recent years, if these robberies accompanied by assault or murder were isolated deeds. So rarely was anyone apprehended, either during or after the fact. And it was not merely cash that the robbers took; they were content with anything of value, even though it were extremely bulky. For instance, here was a robbery of eighty thousand dollars' worth of furs.

No ordinary "fence" could dispose of things like these. It needed an organization to see to it that the laboring thief received his pay. Now, the Chief had an organization whose tentacles reached across the Atlantic—and the Pacific, for all I knew.

Was it likely that there were other organizations as complete as his? I wondered. I turned the pages of the paper.

#### TAXI ACCIDENT ON SIXTH AVENUE

Mrs. Peter Parker, of Boston . . .

As a hurdler takes an obstacle in his stride, so I took into my understanding the two brief paragraphs that followed the name of Mrs. Peter Parker. Her taxi had collided with a truck half a block from the Bennings. She had been rushed to Sisters' Hospital, and the truck driver had been detained for reckless driving. The taximan had been exonerated. Her injuries were serious.

I damned myself a hundred times, on my ride to Sisters' Hospital, for having been of so little faith. Why hadn't it occurred to me that blue-eyed, red-haired people are rarely dishonest? Why hadn't I *known* that Minnie Humphrey was on the square? I should have known that nothing save accident could have prevented her from keeping faith with me.

Such faith, the sort of faith I ought to have had, would have made me, last night, telephone all the hospitals. I could have recovered the necklace, freed Rose . . . It came of being a thief myself, I bitterly mused. A thief may trust briefly, but his suspicions are quickly aroused; dishonest himself, he comes in time to see all others as himself—persons merely awaiting opportunity to do the crooked thing.

Unquestionably, had I returned later (Continued on page 167)

want me to hand over two millions in diamonds," cried Parsons, "because of a girl thief?"

This was more mystery that would solve itself later, perhaps. At present it was enough for me to realize that I had no means of getting in touch with the Chief now. He had taken Rose somewhere, and I'd not the slightest idea where that somewhere was. If the necklace were right in my waistcoat pocket—where it should have been had I been less fatuous in my blind trust in Minnie—I would not have known where to take it, how to assure the release of Rose.

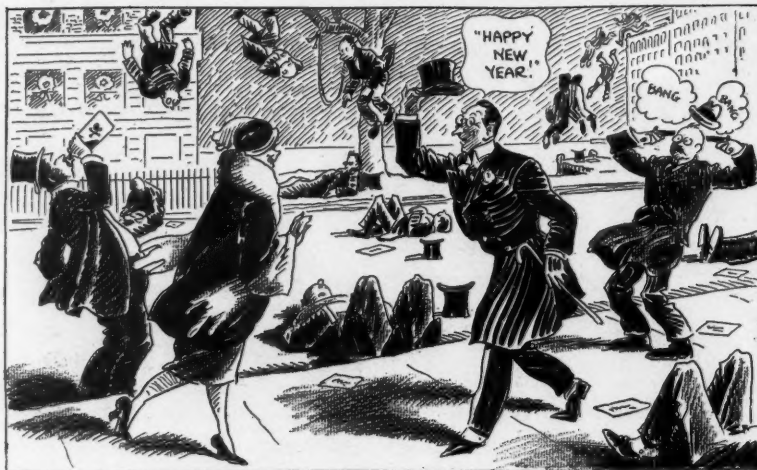
I cursed the blundering honesty of the clerk who had caused the Chief and his retainers to flee from the Winsor. Why hadn't he taken the bell-captain's word? At that, it had taken him a long time to act upon his suspicions. I could visualize him nodding sagely, his forehead creased with lines of doubt, probably muttering to himself, saying that it looked funny, yet hesitant, as dull people often are, to voice his suspicions.

But when he finally acted upon them, and the missing boy was found, that missing boy must have talked. Unless he, too, were one of the gang. But suppose that he wasn't. Then he'd have told my description; my clothes lay beside him; they would almost instantly be identified as the garments of Mr. Wilbert Clarke, whose room was across the hall.

Here was reticence of a cunning sort. The police did not wish to let Mr. Clarke suspect that they knew who had struck the bell-boy. As if Mr. Clarke would be deceived by such reticence! But then, the police are—the police.

I had been facing an impasse last night; now it was not merely a blind alley in which I found myself, but a cell. I couldn't

# A Little Scheme of My OWN



☛ An average street on New Year's if we adopted my idea.

**D**ID you ever have a private scheme which you fondled with favor (even as many a mother sees only beauty in her own defective offspring) while all of your cold-blooded and unemotional friends regarded it as another attempt at a joke? Did you ever sit on some project and keep it warm when everyone in the world, except you, knew that nothing would be hatched out?

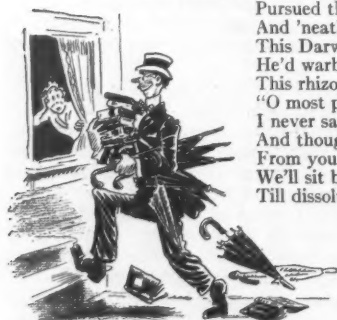
The best verses I ever wrote were rejected by managers, scoffed at by singing comics and vetoed by producing directors. I couldn't work them into a musical play so all I could do was carry them around and recite them at dinner-parties, thereby blocking the conversation. The work to which I am alluding was turned out twenty years ago, has never appeared in any periodical of general circulation and probably will be cut out by Editor Ray Long when he reads this script. This masterpiece, as I insist upon calling it, is entitled "The Microbe's Serenade." It should be cut out and preserved by all young writers who are ambitious to do "lyrics" for the stage. It is a perfect specimen of what the Shuberts and Dillingham do *not* want. Here it is:

A love-lorn microbe met by chance,  
At a swagger bacteroidal dance,  
A proud bacillian belle, and she  
Was first of the animalculæ.  
Of organisms saccharine  
She was the protoplasmic queen,  
The microscopical pride and pet  
Of the biological smartest set;  
And so this infinitesimal swain  
Evolved a pleading, low refrain:  
"O lovely metamorphic germ!  
What futile scientific term  
Can well describe thy many charms?  
Come to these embryonic arms!  
Then hie away to my cellular home  
And be my little diatom!"

His epithelium burned with love,  
He swore, by molecules above,  
She'd be his own gregarious mate  
Or else he would disintegrate.  
This amorous mite of a parasite

Pursued the germ both day and night,  
And 'neath her window often played  
This Darwin-Huxley serenade;  
He'd warble to her every day  
This rhizopodical roundelay:  
"O most primordial type of spore!  
I never saw your like before,  
And though a microbe has no heart,  
From you, sweet germ, I'll never part;  
We'll sit beneath some fungus growth  
Till dissolution claims us both."

You'd think that anything as good as that would get recognition for the author, but it never did. Sometimes I feel that my plans for improving conditions never



☛ I advocate Returning Day as a national holiday.

arrive anywhere because I am always an advocate of *doing* something instead of *prohibiting* something. The only proposition which appeals to the general intelligence nowadays is one which involves the idea of stopping a lot of people from doing the things they are accustomed to do and which they feel that they have a right to do.

The man who stands out in the middle of the street and says, "Let's get a rope and go and hang someone!" will find a hundred willing volunteers to help him, but the one who proposes a lot of hard manual labor for the good of the community will find himself standing alone, talking to himself.

We are putting a premium on the negative virtues. The good citizen is not the one who helps to make life pleasanter for his neighbors. He is now the animated vegetable who does not drink, smoke, gamble or cuss. The same lack of ambition which prevents him from having any of the traditional vices also deprives him of all useful virtues. He is not an asset to any community or an ornament to the landscape and yet he is perfectly delighted with himself, because he refrains from doing the things he doesn't want to do.

All of my programs for the betterment of the race have been what a college professor or a chamber of commerce orator would call "constructive." But I couldn't sell them to anyone except myself.

**A**WAY back in 1895, when I went to Europe for the first time on the prehistoric Etruria, I observed the American business man trying to relax and rest, pacing the deck like a caged tiger and frequently walking to the bow and looking intently in the general direction of New York, wondering about the Stock Market and receipts and orders. I wrote a piece suggesting that, at intervals across the Atlantic, there might be placed floating buoys which would bob or push out of the way of passing craft. These buoys would have wire connections with the cables lying along the bottom of the ocean and the liners, by pausing and picking up any cable buoy, could get late news and market quotations. Crazy, I grant you, but not half as crazy as the wireless.

When I launched this wonderful plan for tapping the transatlantic cables the editor who employed me told me to prolong my vacation until I was thoroughly rested up.

I talked the idea to travelers and they had their steamer chairs moved. No support whatever. But when, about the time that prohibition impacted itself against an unsuspecting world, I proposed to organize the Oasis Gelatin Capsule Company, so that unfortunates compelled to attend total abstinence dinners or other dry functions could swallow, in advance, large egg-shaped receptacles (containing stimulants), which would dissolve at intervals, according to the thickness of the walls, releasing the contents and imparting a series of jolts just when the jolts would be most needed—when I proposed getting a patent on that nightmare idea, all of my conservative business friends told me to go ahead and they would be glad to take a lot of stock.

People pitied me when I advocated, seriously, the establishment of a national holiday to be known as Returning Day, the observance of the day to be the restoration to proper owners of everything that had been borrowed during the preceding year, with special reference to books, umbrellas and garden implements. Since I demanded this holiday several people, just as deluded as





**C**I couldn't get my best poem published, so I recited it.

# By George Ade

Illustrations by  
John T. McCutcheon

I am, have joined in the appeal but there are only five or six of us altogether who favor such a holiday and of course we will never get it. We are pulling for something useful and sensible instead of trying to forbid something and we are doomed to failure.

I had to modify my first suggestion, which was that we adopt the Chinese custom, namely: that any man who cannot pay all of his debts on New Year's Day shall go out and kill himself. It is a beautiful custom but it would not work in this country. Who would want to go out for a stroll and find the streets piled three or four feet deep with corpses?

**I**HAD another scheme which was intended to back up that useful slogan "See America First." I have long cherished a theory that any traveler who takes a railway journey anywhere in our country is looking out at objects of interest if he could learn the truth about them. It seemed to me that every railway company should provide for every traveler a compact little book telling all about the various towns along the line and their traditions and what notables had resided there and what the farmers grew and what had happened on this or that spot within sight of the train.

Years ago, when the Indiana Society of Chicago ran a special train to Indianapolis, I had a chance to exploit my pet idea and I wrote a guide for the Monon Railway between Chicago and Indianapolis. This book has never been seen except by the people who were on the train that day and all of them have lost their copies, and so the following extracts will have the charm of novelty and probably not much else. I give the thing simply in broken sections:

"The train departs from Dearborn Station, which is in Polk Street. The first few miles of the journey are devoid of special interest but a genuine thrill is guaranteed when the train emerges from the smoke-banks of Chicago, hurdles the state barrier and begins to amble through the sun-kissed plains of INDIANA.

"The train crosses the STATE LINE and eagerly enters Indiana. Note the smiling faces, the added tinge of green in the luxuriant vegetation, the simple majesty of the buildings that decorate the broad sweeps of the Hoosier Campana, and the peculiar turquoise-blue of the sky—something like Italy, only more so.

"Northeast from the point at which we enter our native state, lies the important town of WHITING, a distributing point for the late Standard Oil Company. Crude oil is piped to Whiting from many far-distant points in other states and it is a significant fact that no matter how crude the oil may be when it arrives, after remaining in Indiana for a short time, it becomes refined.

"SOUTH HAMMOND. 23.2 MILES. A member of the Society, Mr. W. D. Nesbit, who was specially commissioned to secure historical data and folk-lore for use in this volume, made a visit to South Hammond, and reports to the Society that it is so called because it lies south of Hammond. We do not vouch for the accuracy of this report; we merely give his unsupported statement and you may accept it for whatever it seems to be worth.

"RENSELAER. 72.8 MILES. The town lies some distance west of the tracks. Rensselaer is the county-seat of Jasper County and is about as old as Chicago and is said to be better preserved as regards morals. The census of last year gave a population of

2,373, since which time two old citizens have dropped dead on hearing that the Monon was about to build a new depot.

"MONTICELLO. 98.6 MILES. It is asserted that Noah unloaded the original pair of black bass into the Tippecanoe River at this point. Mr. Emory Sellers, a distinguished attorney now residing in Monticello, also sets up the claim that this town is in the exact center of the earth, because the horizon has been equidistant in every direction from the Court-House Square from a time when the memory of the oldest inhabitant runneth not to the contrary.

"DELPHI. 111 MILES. Capt. Johnnie Lathrop is still leading the Delphi Silver Cornet Band. If you happen to be in town any Thursday evening, go up to the court-house yard and listen to the concert. A jealous journalist of Frankfort once wrote: 'Delphi is a lonely old woodpecker, sitting on a dead snag in the Wabash Valley. Its inhabitants thrive on reminiscence and journey once a week to the cemetery to repeat the Psalm of Life.' This is officially denied in Delphi.

"HORTON. 159.9 MILES. Uncle Joe Cannon once lived two miles west of Horton on what is now known as the Coffin farm. This was several years ago. Uncle Joe was an innocent country boy and had not learned to smoke.

"WESTFIELD. 163.4 MILES. Westfield can claim the greatest mascot combination in the state. If the town continues prosperous and happy, possibly it will be because one of the best-known citizens of the town is a red-headed negro who drives a pacing mule.

"BROAD RIPPLE. 175.3 MILES. This spot will be remembered for ages because it was here that a railway train was wrecked, thereby instigating the poem by the Bard of Alamo and contributing to English Literature the immortal couplet:

"Then I heard a poor man say,  
Cut, oh, cut my leg away!"

**T**HE above will give you some notion as to how many valuable nuggets can be picked up along any highway. I still think that every traveler should have a guide-book but I cannot find any railroad man who feels the same way about it.

The Society for the Prevention of calling Sleeping-Car Porters

"George," of which I am an officer, has thousands of enthusiastic members, but I never have been able to rally even a handful of workers for the "Spats," which is a condensed title for any member of the Society for the Protection of American Travelers. This society has no existence except in my overheated imagination; (Cont. on 161)



**C**Emory Sellers contends his town is the exact center of the earth.

# A Very Cool Million

**E**XPOSURE to that curious emotional influenza known as love is constant, one can catch the germ anywhere, yet though a love story may end with a funeral, as did that of Romeo and Juliet, one seldom begins so. It is presumably a matter of taste. Death demands the tribute of a muted mood; in its presence a livelier emotion seems neither proper nor precise. As a matter of taste, therefore, and probably of fact, it is neither proper nor precise to suggest that Richard Mason fell in love at his Aunt Mabel's funeral. And yet . . .

The afternoon was May at its best; outside the little chapel the sun shone as warmly, as still and as golden as the candles at the altar within.

The presiding clergyman droned on; he had not known Richard's aunt and so was reduced to platitudes. Richard, as chief and possibly only mourner, sat with his eyes straight ahead as if in a groove. But he could not keep his thoughts so disciplined. In spite of his efforts they remained human, fugitive, incongruous. The irrelevancies that come to mind at funerals and will not be exorcised.

This girl who sat beside him, so very still. Richard, without consciously seeing her, was yet conscious of her. Of her bowed head, her hands lying folded in her lap. Young and yet so definitely anything but youthful. Even seated, her dark skirt fell well below her knees, without need of any adjustment. Yet her ankles were slim—almost provocative.

Richard stirred slightly, frowned heavily. Nevertheless: "I wonder if she is really sorry," his thoughts ran on and, despite himself, considered that unlikely.

She—Jean Sawyer—had been his Aunt Mabel's companion for almost three years. He had himself inserted the advertisement she had answered. He had selected her from the other applicants and sent her along to see his aunt. She had been rather younger than he might have chosen, save for the steadiness of her gaze, the swift intelligence of her replies to his questions, her very evident competency.

Exactly, he had decided, the companion his Aunt Mabel required. With the strength of youth and yet none of youth's follies. The sort of girl whom one simply could not imagine ever powdering her nose. A born companion for elderly women, one might say. A hard life that, he suspected. He knew, anyway—with all respect to what the clergyman was trying to say—that his Aunt Mabel had been no saint and that she must many times have made life miserable for this little companion of hers.

"I wonder if she left her anything," his thought ran on. And it occurred to him that if his aunt had not he must see that this Jean Sawyer got something. A few hundred anyway—enough to carry her over to her next position. And naturally, the best of references.

"She certainly deserves them," he thought and stole a glance at her. She stirred and, as if without volition, her eyes met his. They were wide eyes, exquisitely lashed and shaped. Yet he was less conscious of that surprising discovery than of something definitely arresting and puzzling he glimpsed in their clear depths. She looked half scared, half defiant.

"Good Lord!" he thought, bewildered. "What can—"

But the clergyman had finished, the service was over, the pathetically small group was disintegrating. The doctor who had attended his aunt before she died in a Boston hotel, the



**J**ean was exactly, Richard decided, the companion his Aunt Mabel required. The sort of girl one could not imagine ever powdering her nose.

lawyer who had handled her affairs, with his wife, who had probably protested against coming—they were, so gathered, symbolic of what his aunt's life had been these last few years—of its social impoverishment and futility.

The truest thing that might be said of the dead, he realized suddenly, was that if it had not been for the fact that she had an income of eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight dollars a year—he knew the precise sum because he had assisted her in putting her capital in what he described as bomb-proof tax exemptions—his Aunt Mabel might have been a sweet and kindly old soul.

As it was she had become, as do so many widowed women with money, a suspicious, censorious, caustic martinet, apparently determined not to be pleased with anybody or anything ever. Even—or perhaps especially—her nephew. Richard had long since so realized.

"Sorry," he had informed Pete Jackson, just three days before, "but I've got to meet my aunt. She's pulling in at three P. M." "But I counted on you for this foursome," Pete had protested. "You said any afternoon this week would suit you."

"The old girl wired me just an hour ago," Richard had explained. "And if I'm not at the station with my hat in hand—"

"Well, what could she do about it?"

"Cut me off without a penny," Richard had informed him with cheerful candor. "And she'd do it, too. She leads me a devil of a life. If I don't show up she bawls me out and if I do she as much as intimates that I'm cultivating her for her money."

"Well—aren't you?" Pete had demanded with the brutal frankness of a friend.

# By Royal Brown

## The Story of a Young Man Who Almost Stayed a Bachelor



Illustrations by  
Edward Ryan

To his credit, be it said, that Richard did not wonder about the will. He was discovering a real affection for his Aunt Mabel. No one could call her precisely lovable and her attitude toward him had often been tinged with animosity. Yet she had helped him through college; she was generous. At Christmas and on his birthday—

"She was a good old scout," was the way all this crystallized in his mind.

And, flippant though it may sound, that was sincere and higher tribute than the clergyman at this, her funeral, had managed to achieve.

The will, however, could not be long ignored. It was read the morning after the funeral in her lawyer's office. The latter awaited Richard and beside his desk sat—Jean Sawyer. Richard was momentarily surprised, yet he realized on second thought that she might well have what are euphemistically referred to as "hopes."

Of her, during the night, he had dreamed. Curiously, fragmentarily. This morning, however, she was surely not the stuff dreams are made of.

It seemed to him that she wore precisely the same clothes she had

"There certainly ought to be a *quid pro quo*," Richard had admitted, unabashed. "Somebody is going to get her money some day and—"

"Why not tell her that you were detained by important business?" Pete had broken in.

"She'd never swallow that," Richard had assured him. "She has yet to be convinced, Pete, that bond selling is a business. She wants to see sweat on my brow. 'Real work' is a piquant phrase she often uses. I'm sorry, Pete—some other day."

This should have settled it. But even as Richard had finished his renunciation he had punctuated it with a wistful glance at the brilliant May sky. A glance such as Oscar Wilde's hero, who must die, gave it.

"Pete, don't push me—I'm slipping," he had announced. "I—oh hang it, I'll chance it. I'll tell her that it was business—and may heaven help me! The old girl and the Spanish Inquisition have much in common. I fear the worst."

For the worst he had been prepared when he presented himself at his aunt's hotel that night. But not for the news Jean Sawyer had met him with.

"But—but—" he had gasped incredulously.

"One of her heart attacks," she had explained. "She complained about that and seemed frightened. I called in a doctor and—her lawyer. She—she insisted upon making a will."

appeared before him in as an applicant three years ago. The same serviceable hat, with not a concession to style, a dark dress, common sense shoes and stockings of lisle.

The lawyer proceeded to the will at once. The usual legal preliminaries were disposed of.

"To my faithful companion, Jean Sawyer," the emotionless voice then went on, "the sum of ten thousand dollars outright."

Richard's first reaction was purely automatic. Ten thousand! But then . . . "She probably earned it, at that," he thought sympathetically. And so, with the swift smile that could be so engaging, he glanced at her. She surprised him anew by what he saw in her eyes as they met his. But:

"To my nephew, Richard Clark Mason," the dry voice was proceeding, "the sum of one dollar and my Bible, which I hope he will read with benefit to himself."

Richard's mouth popped open, but he did not speak, though the lawyer as if fearing interruption pressed on rapidly.

"The rest of my estate is to be held in trust for an indefinite period, during which the income is to be paid to the aforesaid Jean Sawyer, in the belief that she will administer it wisely and in accordance with my wishes."

The lawyer paused and looked over his glasses toward Richard. "This will," he explained, "had been drawn up by your aunt before I arrived. It is most unusual in that final disposition of



the estate remains in abeyance indefinitely. A letter, addressed to Miss Sawyer, has been placed in my care, to be delivered to her should she feel the need of further instruction. It is my impression that your aunt fully realized what she was doing, but if you choose to contest the will—"

"I have no such intention," Richard assured him stiffly.

He rose, bowed to Jean Sawyer, nodded to the lawyer and started for the door.

"Your aunt's Bible," protested the lawyer, hastening after him.

Richard accepted it, repressing a human rather than irreverent impulse to throw it at him. And it lay on his desk, still wrapped up, when Pete Jackson breezed in at noon, prepared to deliver decorous congratulations. Instead:

"Good Lord," Pete gasped, "she didn't cut you off without a penny!"

"Not at all," retorted Richard drily. "I benefit to the extent of one dollar and her Bible—which I am exhorted to read daily."

"My eye!" exclaimed Pete. "Who gets the rest?"

Richard told him with a clipped brevity.

"Undue influence," announced Pete promptly. "I'll bet you can knock that will into a cocked hat, Ricky. Let this rising young barrister have a shot at it."

"Nothing doing!" said Richard. "I'd look pretty in court fighting a woman."

"But nearly a million!" wailed Pete. "Your aunt must have been crazy . . ."

"She wasn't!" replied Richard flatly. "And I'm not going to try to prove her so. It was *her* money anyway. She had a right to do what she wanted with it when you come right down to cases. And that's—that!"

"All very pretty," commented Pete, who persisted in seeing the legal phases, "but just think a minute of what you could do with the money—"

"I begin to suspect," Richard assured him candidly, "that I've been thinking too much about that."

AND it had been that realization he had been confronting when Pete had broken in upon him. He had always spoken of his aunt's money lightly, almost disparagingly. As a nice little nest-egg that might come to him some day, but nothing that he was absolutely dependent upon, or even counted upon, overmuch.

In a good year, selling bonds on salary and commission, he might net as much as five thousand. In a lean year the amount might drop to three. He could, in either a fat or a lean year, have increased the amount measurably, had he been willing not only to sell but to live bonds—eat, drink and dream them as some men in the office did.

This had never seemed necessary. In the first place the pluggers had a pretty dry time of it and there was more to life than just bonds. Furthermore, he was only thirty. Any time he felt the need of buckling down he could. In the meantime with his salary, commissions and the sizable checks that came from his aunt at Christmas and on his birthdays, he had done himself well enough. Golf, a good club in town, a car, comfortable quarters and what-not.

So much for the present. Beyond that, if he read of a world cruise in a small schooner, it was with the comfortable thought that something like that might be possible for him—some day. And so on, through a long list of desirable things that had challenged his imagination from time to time.

Now, in a little more than two hours, all this was changed. It was, in a way, funny. He admitted it.

"Odd that she left you her Bible," suggested Pete abruptly. "Let's have a look at it. It may suggest a clue."

Richard let him have his way.

"It's full of marked passages," reported Pete promptly. "Here's one in Proverbs . . . Ricky, a great light breaks upon me—"

"Maybe," commented Richard. "But you aren't shedding any."

"What's the matter with the old bean this morning?" demanded Pete. "Didn't you tell me that your aunt disapproved of your not working harder? Well, listen to this. 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise—'"

"That has a reminiscent ring," admitted Richard. "Still—"

But Pete was turning over pages like a hound on a hot scent. "Here's another," he announced. "'As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.'"

"I am happier at the moment with my quiver empty," Richard cut in. "On my present income, that is—and one dollar instead of—"

"Beautiful but dumb!" apostrophized Pete. "Think, man! Your aunt left you a dollar and her Bible, which she hoped you would read and benefit by. In the meantime the bulk of her estate is held in trust, intact—"

"With her faithful companion enjoying the income," Richard reminded him.

"But your aunt left a sealed letter," persisted Pete. "I'll bet anything there's another will in that, leaving you everything, provided—"

"Provided I begin to get busy and start acquiring a quiver of arrows?" derided Richard. "The trouble with you, Pete, is that you've been seeing too many movies."

"Show me a weak spot in my dope!" suggested Pete aggressively.

"The weak spot," obliged Richard, "is that the sealed letter you refer to is not to be opened until my aunt's 'faithful companion' sees fit to—"

"Exactly," Pete broke in. "She's to wait until she sees the signs in you."

"And until then she enjoys the income," Richard reminded him relentlessly. "I don't want to seem unduly cynical but I have a hunch that it would be rather hard to convince any woman that I had undergone so deep and significant a change of heart that she should give up an income like that!"

"That's true," admitted Pete. "Your aunt must have trusted her a lot."

"Obviously," contributed Richard.

"Look here, Ricky, I'm going to see this dame myself—"

"Not as my representative," said Richard firmly. "There are other ways," Pete grinned. "What does she look like?"

Richard told him.

"Ouch," groaned Pete. "But I'm going to get to the bottom of this just the same. I scent a mystery—see you tomorrow."

But he didn't. That was Richard's fault. As Pete departed he picked up the Bible, started to place it in a drawer and then, in spite of himself, opened it. At a marked passage too.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil (he read); which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

To him that suggested a truer clue to his aunt's mental processes in making her will than anything Pete had produced. If she believed money to be the root of all evil—

The thought was broken off as he read another passage.

"Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun."

That, it seemed to him, ought to have discounted the first verse he had read.

"But perhaps," he decided, "she doubted my ability to see the sun—whatever that means."

It struck him then that this was all profitless anyway to a young bond salesman, now very much on his own. He had yet to discover that even a young bond salesman can find in the Bible a consecrated knowledge of man and his works, his habits and prejudices, that can be found nowhere else within one cover. Even this brief dip into it was to serve him. But as he put it aside and attacked his mail he did not guess that.

THE first letter he read was from a woman to whom he had occasionally sold bonds in the past. She wanted to know if he were going to be up her way soon. Up her way was northern Vermont, in a little town built around a chair factory her husband had owned as he had owned most of the town.

Richard had a swift vision of a long tedious trip. And the cheerless chamber he had slept in, the last time he had visited this particular client. "Never again," he had assured himself then. And that promise to himself he would certainly have kept had he this morning inherited his aunt's money. But now—well, when Pete came in the next morning he was told that Richard had gone to Vermont.

It was a week before Richard returned.

"You're a hot sketch!" announced Pete. "Where have you been, anyway?"

"Playing the provinces," retorted Richard, in a tone that might have caused Pete to wonder at any other time—it suggested a triumph achieved rather than an ordeal survived. "What's bothering you?"

"I've been trying to get in touch with you. Jean—"

"Jean?" echoed Richard, puzzled. "Oh—you mean Miss Sawyer?"



**C** "Don't you know," said Jean, "that when a man looks right through a girl as if she didn't exist, that is torture?" "Not unless she loves him," Richard suggested quickly.

"Yep—she lets me call her Jean now," burbled Pete blissfully. "What?" gasped Richard, astounded.

The symptoms Pete was revealing were not new. But Richard could not believe he read them aright. Granted that Pete had a flair for feminine entanglements, he demanded a decorative effect in the ladies he permitted to disturb his poise.

"She certainly is a lalapaloosa, Ricky," Pete added. "She can park her vanity case in my pocket anywhere, any time she chooses——"

"Are you crazy?" demanded Richard. "Vanity case—I'll bet you ten dollars she never owned one."

"You lose!" retorted Pete, and flashed a gleaming device of platinum and black enamel. "She let me carry this for her last night."

"Good Lord!" gasped Richard. "Are you sure you got the right Jean?"

"No doubt about it. She wants to see you before she leaves Boston."

"Me? But you promised you wouldn't mention my name——"

"I didn't. She spotted me at once—you can't put anything over on that girl, Ricky—and I—I promised you would see her."

"Nothing stirring!" Richard announced with great finality.

"All right," said Peter hotly. "But you're a poor sport. You pretend to believe that your aunt had a perfect right to leave her

money to anyone she chose but just the same you're so darned sore that——"

"Sore?" protested Richard indignantly. "I'm not sore."

"What else can you expect her to think?" demanded Pete.

That gave Richard pause. He considered it a moment. Then: "I'll see her," he promised grimly.

"Atta-boy," applauded Pete. He reached for Richard's phone. "I'll fix it up for this afternoon right now."

It was so arranged and at four Richard found himself approaching the suite Jean Sawyer now occupied. As he knocked upon the door he was calm, self-assured and prepared for anything. But as the door opened so did his eyes.

"Miss—Miss Sawyer?" he murmured, doubtfully and inanely.

"So much for new clothes—and a shingle bob!" she commented satirically. "Won't you come in?"

As he obeyed she took his hat, as she had so often in the past. Yet with a difference. She had been but his aunt's shadow then. Now——

"I think," she said serenely, as if supplementing his thought, "that it is mostly the shingle bob. I approached the moment when it was to be achieved almost prayerfully—but I adore it now!"

"It is an improvement," he commented, with an effort.

"Pete said that much more prettily," (Continued on page 173)



Miss Elsa Ueland, head of Carson College for Girls.

# By Rheta I'd Like My Orphan

About a girl child you know much less. In fact, all you do know is that she will grow up a woman, and for women there is no such thing any more as a standardized life. In the good old days which, thank heaven, will never return, all you had to do for a girl was to cultivate her looks, dress her as well as you could afford, add to her rather sketchy education a few parlor accomplishments, and let nature take its course. She married and was off your hands.

How simple it was then! How complicated it is now!

Of course every mother hopes and believes that her little angel will grow up ravishingly pretty and become some good man's adored wife. In this country, with its larger male population, there is a strong probability that almost any girl can marry. But can she stay married? Divorce statistics move ahead so rapidly

that one forgets whether it is now one marriage in ten or one in eight that ends in a smash. But clearly it isn't safe to bring up a girl to be a wife and nothing else.

There is no telling how to bring up a girl and be certain that nature will take its course with her. Nevertheless parents persist in trying to do it. The public schools try. The men and women at the heads of all school systems know perfectly well that the rank and file of girls leaving grammar school, and that means three-fourths of all city girls, will go into some kind of a wage-earning job. The girls know it too. Yet there is hardly a school system in the United States in which the status of girls as wage-earners is seriously considered.

The schools have, in recent years, added to the curriculum manual training for boys, and for girls an inadequate and futile thing called domestic science. It is inadequate because it is hardly ever scientific, and it is futile because before the average girl has any earthly use for it she will have worked from seven to ten years in a factory, an office or a department store. Meanwhile her mother has done all the housekeeping and the girl has forgotten every blessed thing the school taught her about it.

All this was borne in on me some years ago when I was living on the East Side of New York making a first-hand study of women in industry. It was a year of financial panic, strikes, lockouts and unemployment. I, with others closely in touch with women wage earners, went into committees to find temporary jobs for girls thrown out of work and in despair for themselves and their families. We canvassed the situation thoroughly and we found that the one industry which was crying out for women was the summer hotel business. Summer hotels in the mountains and at the seaside badly needed girls to make beds and to wait on tables.

Could we supply those vacancies? We could not. Out of hundreds of girls on our lists not a single one knew how to make a bed or wait on a table. Every one was a grammar school

OF ALL sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are, or used to be, the doctor's announcement, "It's a girl." Few parents nowadays regard the advent of a girl baby as an actual calamity, but I think that most mothers, in their hearts, feel a little disappointed when the first one, at least, isn't a boy.

With me it was just the other way. Since there was a chance that the first baby might also be the last I tried with all my might to have a daughter. When I heard the doctor's announcement, "It's a boy," I confess I wept. I confess that I still hold a grudge against Providence for denying me the daughter I tried to have in my early twenties.

This is no reflection on my son. I am bound to say that as a son he has turned out almost one-hundred percent satisfactory. I don't wish he were a girl; but I wanted a daughter and I haven't got one.

I wanted a girl that I might have the magnificent adventure of bringing her up a splendid woman. As I look at it the object of bringing up any child is to make a successful adult. That is, a person of character and power, physically well, morally strong, socially valuable, personally charming and attractive. I don't claim that many boys are brought up to be all that. I merely claim that the girl who has half a boy's chance is as rare as the traditional white blackbird.

Of course it is much easier to bring up a boy. From the hour of his birth you know, in a general way, what to do about him. You know something of what his future will be, hence you are prepared to fit him for it. You do not know whether he is going to be an intellectual giant or just an average man, but you do know that after he has had all the education you can buy him, or all that he can absorb, he will begin to earn his living. In some business, trade or profession he will earn money, and unless he is a total loss, he will go on earning money until he dies or retires a rich man.



The girls are taught old-fashioned home-making.



# Childe Dorr Daughter in This Asylum

graduate, and some had had a year or two of high school. Most of them remembered having taken domestic science, but it was so long ago, and they'd never had any practise. They were afraid to try.

You cannot bring up a girl without regard to the fact that she may have to earn her living. Nor can you bring her up, as you do a boy, with the certainty that she will always hold a salaried job. Even in the working classes the average term of women in industry is less than eleven years.

One woman in three or four in the United States serves her term in industry, but in the end the vast majority marry. How are you going to bring up a girl to make her successful in both jobs?

If I had a daughter I should begin by recognizing that her life presented exactly that complication. Her whole training would be based on the fact that women have to have more versatility, more adaptability than men. If she were to rise above the lowest average she would have to face greater odds than men. She would need an education much broader and much less specialized.

And here I come to the very thing my daughter should be educated in. Responsibility. For herself first, and when she went to work—if she did—for her job. When she married, for her home and her children.

One of the first things my daughter should be made to feel responsible about would be money. Have you ever thought that whatever else a woman does in life she is bound to spend money?

I didn't know how to teach my son to spend money intelligently, but being a man he learned somehow from life. It isn't so easy for a girl. But it can be done, and I have discovered one place where it is being done. Not in the homes of any of my friends, rich or poor, but in an orphan asylum! I know it sounds unbelievable, but then this particular orphan asylum is almost unbelievable. You won't even find it classed with other orphan asylums. Its legal name is the Carson College for Girls.

Back of Carson College there is a remarkable history. In 1907 a very rich man died in Philadelphia, leaving among his bequests \$5,000,000 and his old home farm in Pennsylvania to found a school for "poor, healthy girls, both of whose parents shall be deceased." The girls on entering had to be between six and ten, and they had to be graduated into life at eighteen. That wasn't all. Robert N. Carson, unsuspected by his family, had for years pondered on the whole subject of the education of females for life, and he left such directions for the conduct of his school for orphans that the heirs concluded that he must have been of unsound mind, or duly influenced or—or something. The will was wrangled over in the courts for ten years, but finally the farm and the endowment went into the hands of trustees, and in the summer of 1918 Carson College was opened.



*All the printing for the College is done by the girls.*



*Daily outdoor work helps in keeping them healthy.*

As director there was chosen Miss Elsa Ueland, a handsome young woman who had never had anything to do with institutions, but was a high school teacher imbued with the advanced educational ideals of such men as John Dewey and William Wirt of Gary, Indiana.

By the time Miss Ueland arrived there had been erected one large granite building such as any board of trustees would deem a fitting foundation for an orphan asylum.

Miss Ueland looked at it and said, in effect: "Fine for schoolrooms, gymnasiums, offices and other necessary evils.

But no place to bring up children in."

Like other old farms this one had a few wooden houses and outbuildings, and four of these were immediately rebuilt and modernized into cottage homes. As the attendance grew

village houses were rented, and now more than one hundred lucky orphans live in nine old-timey homes, with gardens, barns, chicken houses, dog kennels and rabbit-hutches, even garrets. With a teacher in each house the girls live as nearly as possible normal home lives, each girl taking her share of housework, cooking, marketing, gardening, et cetera. I haven't space to go into this, nor how the home life is supplemented by the community life of the surrounding town. The Carson College playground, gymnasium, dance-hall, library, health office and dental clinic are shared with the town children. Whatever the town has for children and young people is shared by the Carson girls. What I want to get at is the way in which those orphans are brought up to take the responsibility of their own lives.

From the time they enter the school they are made to know that each girl has her own individual income. So much money is set aside annually for each girl to buy her clothes, to buy her amusements, picture shows, theaters, music, and later on to buy trade and professional training. At first the sum is rather small, but it is enough, and it belongs to the girl and to nobody else. She can spend it as she likes. Of course she has advice, expert advice. Her taste in dress is cultivated, her (Continued on page 205)

Illustrations by  
J. W. McGurk



**C.** "Act natural and leave it to us," I says. "Nobody'll suspect you ain't celebratin' your wooden weddin'."

**A**ND they say I'm hard-boiled! Huh! They shoulda seen me this last coupla weeks easin' a pair of honey-mooners along on their first tour as gentle as a trained nurse wheelin' twins.

How I come to be drivin' private so far from Times Square is a matter we'll pass over sketchy, but I'll say this—no super for a taxi company can hang any such fine on Spike Mullins as this bird tried to soak me with and get off with nothin' but a dirty look. We had a little argument, short but snappy, and then I swung a haymaker to his jaw. He shouldn't have come back, that's all, for the next one I steamed in had no maybe in it, and it was just his own carelessness that got his scalp opened against that runnin'-board edge.

They was callin' an ambulance for him as I left so I don't know how many stitches it took, but I know I hopped the Chicago limited without leavin' any forwardin' address and from there jumped north to this Middle-West burg where I grabbed off the first job that came my way, which happens to be on a towel supply truck. Nice, classy outfit, too; yellow with blue letterin', and a motor that would hit on all four if you kept her wide open.

I hadn't been at that more'n a week, and had the route all learned, when one mornin' me and the Swede driver of a limousine tried to crowd into the same parkin' space at the same time.

"Back oop, you!" he shouts. "Dass private place."

"So's your old man," says I. "Back up yourself."

"Dass sign say so. See?" and he points to it.

"Yaah, you herring eater!" says I. "Get outa there before I climb in and smear your nose all over that squash pie face."

I was on my way to him when he throws in the reverse and beats it down the block. Also I made my delivery and was comin' out of the factory when I meets this poddy little gent with the mild blue eyes walkin' in.

"So you're the driver who bluffed my chauffeur out of his place, are you?" he asks.

"Take it from me, boss," says I, "that was no bluff. I had a wallop all ready to hand him."

"H-m-m!" says he, lookin' me over critical. "Then you don't believe in signs, do you?"

# Just

## A Recipe—from a Chauffeur

"Not when they block me from my job," says I. "When I gotta leave towels, I leave 'em."

"But this is my factory," he goes on. "I have a police permit to reserve that space. And you crowd me out."

"Sorry, boss," says I, "but you ought to be ridin' behind a winner."

That should have riled him, but it don't. A sort of flicker comes into his mild eyes. "You're a winner, are you?" he asks. "I'm nothing but," says I. "Anyhow, I usually get where I'm goin' to."

"Ah!" says he. "So it seems. And Nels does so only now and then. Ever drive anything besides a truck?"

"Only every kind of a high-priced car on the market—more than that Swede ever knew was built," says I. "This truckin' is just an accident with me. Want a demonstration?"

"Yes," says he. "Come around at six this afternoon—as clean as possible."

Well, you know how it is. They think they have traffic in these jay dumps and you can't tell 'em different. I didn't let on how I'd swung a meter bus through Broadway theater jams for two years, so when I rolls him in and out of the worst snarls State House Square can produce, rushes the red lights a couple of times, and hogs the right of way off'm a few hick drivers, he thinks I'm a wonder.

"You couldn't have learned to drive like that in jail, Mullins," says he, "and perhaps in a regular uniform you'll look less like an ex-bruiser. Anyway, I'm going to take a chance."

"You're a sport, boss," says I, "and you ain't gonna lose by it. When do we sign up?"

"Now," says he. "I shall release Nels as soon as I get home."

Which is what I call pickin' one on the fly.

And inside of a week I was wised up about this Colonel Icks and the whole fam'ly. They was new richers. That is, they'd had it only six or eight years. Patent floor tilin' was his line, and I understand when he first worked out the process he had only a four-man crew in a shed somewhere and lived in a two tenement house on the wrong side of the railroad tracks. But he plunged heavy on advertisin', his stuff hit the market and now he has this two-acre plant runnin' to capacity with the profits simply pourin' in.

I expect it must have been Mrs. Icks that insisted on buildin' this classy lake-front joint with the frisky stone lions on the high gate-posts out front and the Italian garden in the back. The Colonel ain't one to throw so much dog. Kind of a meek, peaked-nosed, thin-haired old boy, with a nervous trick of massagin' his chin when he talks, and no ambitions outside of the floor-tilin' business. What he'd ever been colonel of puzzled me until I finds it's only a phony handle he got from being put on the governor's staff because he was free with his campaign contribution. But Mrs. Icks never forgets to use it.

She's one of these three-chinned old dames, built on the lines of a grain elevator, and with a disposition that's been soured by four or five years of snubbin' from the first families. You see, while the Ickses have arrived, nobody seems to know it but them. Livin' in the best house on the best street hasn't got 'em anywhere. It sometimes happens that way, I've noticed, and my guess is that it's her fault. I expect she started high-hattin' the neighbors on account of their not givin' her the sudden rush.

Or maybe it was Miss Mildred they shied at. A snippy party, Miss Mildred. Also for a white-livered, thin-chested, mouse-motoned little wisp, she's mighty exclusive. Not actually homely, you understand. Good eyes, and kind of a perky, selfish little mouth. A poor mixer, though, and about as popular with the younger set as I'd be at a tea dance. Acts peeved because

By Sewell Ford

# Married

—to disguise *Newlyweds*

she ain't asked around and takes it out on mother and the help. Not includin' me. Somehow my plain map and one cauliflower ear must have thrown a scare into her, or else I'm too low down in the scale to waste any crabby words on.

Anyhow, I got on with all of 'em, more or less. Especially the Colonel. He's one of these old boys that's featured strong at the factory, where the heads of departments listen respectful and the common hands touch their hats to him; but when he gets inside the high gates at home it's a different tale. The womenfolks ride him sump'n scandalous. Why, even the maids snicker if he gets reckless enough to give off any orders, knowin' that Lady Icks is likely to say just opposite; and I take it the late Nels followed the same hunch.

BUT me, I plays him as the big boss, every time. No matter where I has to leave the women stranded, I'm in front of the office right on the tick, and they get picked up later. You oughta see me handin' him out the Park Avenue service, too—standin' at the car door pullin' the army salute, steppin' in brisk with a light for his cigar, and answerin' with a "Yes, Colonel, or a "Right away, Colonel," whenever he opens his mouth. I've qualified as his errand boy, valet, and body-guard, and I've turned one or two tricks for him—once when I gave a lippy walkin' delegate the bum's rush, and again when I told Mrs. Icks' dago gardener where he got off—that's made me solid with the main belt. The Colonel's got so he calls me "Spike" and chats chummy on the way back and forth from the factory.

But at that I didn't know how strong he was sold on me until about the third month of my stay when he springs this honeymoon proposition. It was a surprise all around, for while I'd seen this young Wilbur Collins visitin' the Ickses for a few days a spell back I had no idea he was actually gonna fall for Mildred. Seems they'd met the summer before, though, up at some mountain resort, and had been swappin' letters frequent ever since. I'll say she must have been good with the pen and ink, too, for the next I hear the date's all set and I've been picked to drive 'em on their tour.

"It's this way, Spike," the Colonel explains. "Our Millie is a sensitive, high-strung little thing. She's all we have, too, and we think a heap of her, ma and me, and it's going to be kind of tough, handing her over to a young fellow who's almost a stranger to us, as you might say."

"Seems like a decent gink, Wilbur," I suggests.

"Yes, I suppose he is," admits the Colonel. "But he really doesn't know Millie very well. She has odd ways, is apt to work up whims. You see, she hasn't been around with young people very much. Always stayed at home with us. Shy. Gets into moods. Her ma was a good deal like that. Maybe you wouldn't think it now, but I remember when we got to Niagara Falls how she got homesick and cried all one night. No, these honeymoon affairs aren't apt to be all poetry and bliss. We left without getting even a glimpse of the Falls. As for me, I had a boil on my neck and forgot to check the trunks when we left. It's little things like that which are apt to knock out all the romance. But if there could be someone along to manage affairs, smooth things out, and generally take care of Millie—"

"But listen, Colonel," I breaks in, "this is 'way outa my line—honeymoonin'! I never tried it even once. In fact, I ain't a marryin' man. Besides, I doubt if Miss Mildred banks very heavy on me, anyhow."

"I do," says he. "You may not be much of a parlor ornament, Spike, but I've found you trustworthy, reliable, and a quick thinker. I've tried you out several times. You use your head in



C. "But what would people say  
—your folks and mine?"  
Mildred says to Wilbur.

emergencies. And Millie has a lot of faith in your cleverness, too, although perhaps she hasn't shown it. At least, she'll have you to call on if anything comes up—someone she knows. And I'm going to depend on you, Spike, to look after her as well as you can, humor her notions as much as possible, and smooth over the rough places for both of 'em."

"That's a big order, Colonel," says I, "but so long as it's you who bats it up to me I'm gonna tackle it. I'll do my best."

So it was settled, and before I had time to renege everything was set for the grand hitch—the big house decorated with potted palms, a floral altar effect built at one end of the drawin'-room, and young Collins and a lot of his friends and folks arrivin' from Buffalo for the festive occasion.

What Mildred could see in Wilbur, or her in him, is past me. He's kind of a human string-bean, with sort of pop-eyes, not much chin, and a little tooth-brush mustache that looks like it might jar off any minute. But he's a mild-spoken, bashful-mannered young hick, so the two of 'em teamed up well. Besides, I hear his old man has cleaned up a million in the lumber business lately, so he ain't such a poor prize for anyone like Mildred to grab off. For if ever a girl was meant to be an old maid it was her. More'n that, if she'd asked me, the singleton line is what I'd advised her to stick to.

She nearly did, at that. The very mornin' of the weddin' she turns balky. Couldn't bear the thought of leavin' her ma. Honest! I gets it straight from Lena, the up-stairs maid.

"No!" says I. "Why, her and the old lady don't do a thing but spat back and forth reg'lar. Is she afraid she'll miss out on the daily combat?"

"I dunno," says Lena. "She's up there cryin' like she'd bust, and Meesus Icks, she cries too, and Colonel Icks he's been cussin' around sump'n awful. Look like they don't get married a-tall."

But Ma Icks ain't one to let a blubbery bride walk out on her, even if it is her only daughter. I expect she knew this was Millie's one and only chance and she had no notion of watchin' it slide into a soggy flop. Not after she's seen the figures on the check Pa Collins had anteed as a weddin' present and sized up the class displayed by the bridegroom's friends. She's a manager,



Mrs. Icks is. Course, I couldn't swear as to just what did happen, but I know everybody was shoosed out of that part of the house, includin' the Colonel, and that her and Mildred was alone for half an hour. But Lena, with her ear to the floor overhead, says she heard spansks.

Anyhow, the next report is that the nuptials was on again. And after a fashion, the affair dragged through. It wasn't exactly what you'd call a cheerful event, for Miss Mildred is about as bloomin' and blushin' as a half-boiled turnip, and she gives every sign of bein' about to break down. The Colonel acts like he'd just been indicted for first degree, and over in the bay window Ma Icks is sniffin'. Even Wilbur, who'd been bucked up by a couple of snifters from a flask the best man had on his hip, sort of catches the gloom. Also that horse-faced young rector, the Reverend Weir West, didn't help any the way he dirged his lines. He couldn't have been takin' it more serious if he'd been presidin' at an inquest. Say, I was on the point of askin' somebody to sew a black band on my sleeve.

The minute the obsequies was over, though, everything was different. The dinin'-room doors was thrown open, the caterer's gang begun to hustle around, the orchestra cut loose, and the Colonel starts towin' thirsty males into the lib'r'y where we'd fixed up a perfectly good bar, with me in a white coat to open bottles of real fizz. And what a difference a few shots of bonded stuff makes! Why, it ain't long before the Colonel and Pa Collins is swappin' musical comedy nifties, the best man is singin' "The Wedding of Sandy McNab," and Ma Icks is urg'in' Mrs. Collins to stay over for a couple of days.

Accordin' to the plans me and the bridegroom has doped out we was to make a quiet getaway about five p. m., allowin' a two-hour run to some shore resort on Lake Michigan where I'd made reservations, then the next day we'd roll down to Chicago and so on East. Nobody but us was in on the schedule and it seemed perfectly simple—two suitcases already strapped on, the limousine locked in the garage so there couldn't be any funny stuff pulled, and a dummy car waitin' out front.

But the next thing I know Lena is speekin' into the drink-room givin' me the distress signal.

"Miss Mildred, she wanna see you right off," she whispers.

"Oh, all right," says I. "Where is she?"

I'm led up the back stairs to her white-and-gold room where I finds her slumped in a chair twistin' her veil in her hands.

"Well, what's wrong now?" I asks.

"I—I don't dare go down," says she, "until I know what is going to happen."

"Why, not a thing," says I. "Everything is all fixed. Just a few refreshments, maybe a dance or two, then you slip up and change, and when you're all ready we'll do a fadeaway."

"But—but when we start?" she suggests.

"Oh, I see!" says I. "No, there'll be no mob scene staged. We've taken care of that. No rice, nor old shoes, nor brickbats. Nothing but a little confetti, and they'll have to be mighty quick with that."

"I'll have to see them, though—all those people," she objects.

"Well, you can make a dash of it," says I. "Besides, there ain't such a crowd; less'n fifty at most."

"And then where do we go?" she demands.

I explains about the hotel on the lake shore.

"A large hotel?" she asks.

"Not too big," says I. "You can't be sure of first-class accommodations in these small joints."

"Oh, dear!" she moans. "They'll all know we're a bridal couple."

"Depends on how you behave," says I. "Course, if you hold hands in public, or ask each other every few minutes 'Oos itty sweetie is oo?' they'll suspect. They may anyway. You two can't very well pass for old-timers, and likely you'll give yourselves away somehow. But what's the odds?"

She shakes her head and crumples up another yard of the veil. "Oh, I couldn't go through it!" she protests. "Among a lot of strangers. No, no!

They'd stare at me, and whisper things, and laugh behind my back. It—it would be simply awful."

"Nothing more'n newlyweds generally get," says I, "and most of 'em survive it, you know."

But Mildred is sure she's different. "I hate to have people gossiping about me," says she. "Then there would be the hotel clerks, and the bell-boys, and the men in the lobby, and the old ladies on the veranda. They'd tell each other, and—and make silly jokes. Oh, I couldn't endure it! Isn't there some way, Mullins, to—to make them think we've been married a long, long time?"

She had me scratchin' my ear at that. "Well," says I, "'most every bridal couple tries some trick or other, but I expect mighty few get away with it. One little slip and they're spotted. Sorry, Miss Mildred, but right offhand I can't frame up anything that would pass."

Which is where she turns pouty. "Huh!" says she. "And dad is always bragging how clever you are! I believed it, too. That's why I thought it would be nice to have you along. You see though? The first time I ask you to do something for me you stand there staring stupid. Oh, dear!" She slumps into the chair and starts sobbin'.

What I'd like to have done about then would have been to call in Ma Icks and suggest another strong-arm session, and I was just on the point of lettin' out a snappy comeback when I remembers my talk with the Colonel and how I'd promised to humor all her whims to the best of my ability. And here was some whim.

"You wouldn't want to get yourself up in a gray transformation, would you?" I asks, makin' a wild stab.

"And be taken for Wilbur's mother?" she sneers. "How brilliant! No, never mind straining that wonderful mind of yours any further. Perhaps, though, you would be equal to running down to the drug store and getting me a bottle of headache tablets like these. I know I'm going to need them."

So I ain't so cheasy as I sneaks out past the merry bunch in the drawin'-room. I got a glimpse of young Collins, who has changed his frock coat and striped pants for a neat business suit and is beamin' sappy in the midst of his friends. The poor fish, I thinks. He don't know what he's lettin' himself in for. Well, few of 'em do in advance. If they did there'd be an awful slump in the orange-blossom market.

This little five-block ramble gave me time to exercise my so-called brain, but I gotta admit it couldn't produce anything sensible in the line of disguisin' honeymooners.

I might have been draggin' my heels some while I walks back with the headache tablets but I wasn't so low in my mind as to miss seein' a neat pair of ankles as I crosses the little park. Also I had presence enough of mind to turn for a full view of the bobbed blonde that owns the ankles. She's a plain-dressed party, all in black, but she's kind of an easy looker at that, and somehow there's something familiar about the way she holds her head and about them wide-set blue eyes. Might have been some dame I'd met at a dance, and then again it might not. Anyhow, I takes a chance. "Well, well, Cutie!" says I. "I bet you don't remember me."

She has been gazin' sober at some marks she's been makin' with an umbrella point in the gravel walk, and the blue eyes look like they'd been leakin' recent, but as she sees me she unreefs a little smile.

"You'd lose, Spike," says she. "I remember all about you."

And that almost has me gaspin'. "Think of that!" says I. "Name and everything! All but where it was we got together and when. Now you're stuck, eh?"

She shakes her head. "Four summers ago up in Maine at the Springs," says she. "We had six fox-trots together and was startin' for a moonlight drive when the pastry-cook tried to punch your head."

"He didn't, though," says I.



Mr. and Mrs. Icks, the parents of the bride.



**C** "Well, well, Cutie!" says I. "I bet you don't remember me."  
 "You lose, Spike," says the girl. "I remember all about you."

"No," says she. "You punched his. But after he came to he put up such a holler that the joy-ride had to be called off and you checked out with your party early next mornin'. We—we said good-by behind some bushes and you promised that you would—"

"I got it!" says I. "Nellie!"

"Good guess," says she. "I thought I'd have to check that up for you, too; but some of you chauffeurs has wonderful memories."

"Ah, come!" says I, campin' down beside her. "Not so rough, Nellie girl. I been wonderin' if I wasn't ever gonna meet up with you again, and here we are."

"Yes," says she, sighin'. "Here—we—are."

"Well, why all the gloom?" I asks her then. "Anything gone wrong?"

"Anything!" says she. "What ain't?"

She's tryin' her best to keep her lip from tremblin' and her eyes from gettin' weepy again but she can't quite manage it. And say, I'm soft-boiled when they get that way. I slips an arm around her and pats her soothin'.

"Spill it, girlie," says I, "and let's see if there's anything I can do to help."

She says there ain't. Just a case of hard luck all around, with nobody to blame. She gives me the details sobby. Seems her and the pastry-cook was married soon after that merry evenin' of ours, in spite of the fact that she (Continued on page 114)

*A Novel of the*

Big Trees



# *The* *Understanding* Heart

## *The Story So Far:*

MONICA DALE had one of the loneliest jobs in the world. She was the forest lookout on Bogus Mountain in the San Dimas range, Northern California. She was self-educated, and had courage and charm and good looks; and she longed to get out into the world. She had met no one she could love until Anthony Garland, a young lawyer who had taken to outdoor living for his health, came to the San Dimas as a forest-ranger. He and Monica fell in love with one another at once.

Monica, however, did not hesitate to outwit Tony, along with Sheriff Bentley and a posse, when she helped Bob Mason, an escaped convict, to elude his pursuers. Bob had been a rancher and a neighbor of hers, and had been sentenced for killing the superintendent of the near-by Hercules Hydraulic Mining Company. On leaving Monica's cabin after his escape from the prison road gang, he rode north and ran into a raging forest-fire. Forced back, he came upon a woman who had been killed in an overturned automobile, saved her baby, and returned to Bogus, exhausted and badly burned.

On Bogus, Monica and Uncle Charley Canfield were preparing to abandon the lookout cabin ahead of the fire. Uncle Charley was a crotchety and lovable local character who had been partner of Monica's dead father, Ash Dale, in placer-mining. He had come up to tell Monica he had just arranged to sell a certain upland section of mining land to the Hercules Company for \$150,000. The land had really been bought from him by Ash Dale, but the deed had never been recorded or found; so Uncle

Charley agreed to turn over the \$150,000 to Monica. Since the mining company intended to use hydraulics, they would have to sluice down their debris into Bob Mason's ranch, Honey Valley; and Monica and Uncle Charley figured that Bob could sell them the property at a big figure.

After Bob's return to Bogus, Monica fled on his horse with the rescued baby, and Bob and Uncle Charley covered themselves with mud and sod and awaited the fire. Monica had not been long in Tantrum Meadows, near Tony's burned-out ranger station, when it began to rain heavily enough to quench the fire, and Tony Garland arrived looking for her. They went back up Bogus, where they found the sheriff had arrived before them, and was sound asleep on the cabin floor beside Bob and Uncle Charley.

Before Monica's and Tony's arrival, however, the three men had had a long talk, during which Bob told the story of how he had killed the mining superintendent in self-defense, after the latter had emptied a gun at him. Bob had intended to horsewhip the man because he had been too friendly with Bob's wife Kelcey. Uncle Charley then told how Ash Dale had heard the shooting, and after it had seen Kelcey throw the superintendent's gun down an old well, thus destroying Bob's self-defense evidence. Ash himself had been killed in a mine accident, however, before he could give testimony, and Bob had been railroaded into prison through the efforts of the Hercules Company, who wanted to acquire his ranch cheaply to impound their debris.

Soon after Monica and Tony returned to the cabin, Uncle Charley showed signs of collapsing. He hurriedly drew up a will



# By PETER B. KYNE



*Illustrations by  
Herbert M.  
Stoops*

**C** "Set there comfortable and hang on to the pack-rope," Sheriff Bentley admonished the nurse, "and you'll get there yet. If you feel yourself slippin' call out to the ranger."

under Tony Garland's direction, leaving all his property to Monica; but he died before he was able to sign it with his mark.

Monica, who loved the old man dearly, was broken-hearted. During the simple burial on the mountain next day, she stood by silently tearful. A blue jay screamed and scolded vociferously in a neighboring tree; he reminded Monica so much of Uncle Charley!

**A**FTER Uncle Charley Canfield had been lowered into his grave Monica Dale returned to the lookout station. She could not bear to see the little mound growing over Uncle Charley, to see the sheriff and the ranger rounding it up with brisk, businesslike little pats of their spades. Instinctively the gaze of the two men followed her for an appreciable period; then the sheriff gave Uncle Charley's bivouac a final pat and sat down on an adjacent windfall to smoke. Anthony Garland joined him and they puffed in silence for several minutes.

Presently Bentley sighed and spat. "All hell to pay and no pitch hot, Ranger," he declared. "Reckon that posse o' mine thinks I've been burnt up." He spat again. "Honest, if I didn't have my wife and them four girls to care for I'd be shot if I'd run for sheriff again. It's a sorry job. Just think, Ranger. I run that boy Bob with dogs!"

"He entertains no resentment against you for that, Sheriff."

"Well, if he don't, I do. But that ain't the worst of it, son. I've got to leave him here with that Dale girl. Can't trust him

with nobody else—not that he hasn't a lot of friends in this country who'd protect him, but because I can't trust their intelligence. But that Monica girl's smarter'n a road-runner—an' capable. She's got to nurse the boy, and I hate to risk sending a doctor up here to look him over. I wonder if he needs a doctor. The only doctors I know of in this country tell everything they know, even when they don't know it, an' if one of them ever got suspicious that Monica's patient was an escaped convict he'd blat out his suspicions just to prove that nobody could put anything over on *him*. And, of course, the girl's bound to get talked about. Son, you got any bright ideas on this subject? If so, trot 'em out."

"His burns are painful but not serious, Sheriff. A person can live if only one-third of his body has been burned and the burns are first degree. With from a half to two-thirds of his skin destroyed he would die. Mason is burned in patches, first-degree burns, and mostly on the legs where he brushed against hot charred limbs, so I hold that a good trained nurse can handle him as well as any doctor. About all she'll have to do will be to trim off the dead skin and tissue and renew his dressings. I brought over a big bottle of picric acid, absorbent cotton and bandages from Dogwood this morning, and telephoned to Sacramento for a trained nurse to come up and bring a lot of Dakin's solution to wash his sore spots."

"Where did you git all this here medical knowledge, son?"  
 "I read a great deal—and a ranger usually learns more than a smattering of backwoods surgery. I can set legs and arms and sew up a bad cut. Once I handled a case of pneumonia very successfully."

"I'm a good hand at doctorin' sick cows an' horses, but that let's me out. When folks get sick around me all I can do is get 'em good and tight, roll 'em in six blankets near a fire an' sweat 'em; then give 'em a dose o' liver pills an', if I have any handy, a teaspoonful of ipecac. I believe that helps, don't you, Ranger?"

"It does," said Garland solemnly. The sheriff was of the earth, earthy, but very human. Behind the bulwark of official coldness and immovability he had a warm, kind heart; his impulsive nature bade him go out of his official way to perform a kindness to the helpless and the afflicted. Garland liked him; he had an idea Bentley was continually forgetting he was a sheriff and then remembering it—with a jerk, as it were.

"I spread all Monica's beddin' an' linen out to dry as soon as it let up rainin' this mornin'," Bentley continued. "While you was over to Dogwood I toted all her furniture back into the house an' cleaned the hay out o' the livin'-room. The floss mattress was too damp to use, so we spread a blanket over the woven wire mattress an' laid Bob out on it. Reckon it's softer'n he's been used to, at that."

"Where's Monica going to sleep?"

"On the floor. Baby in the wood box."

"Monica will have to have a cot—two cots, rather. One for herself and one for the nurse. And she'll have to have a new mattress for Bob and several new blankets and sheeting; also some sick-room supplies."

"Right you are, Ranger. I reckon Bob'll need a smear o' nightshirts, too. Whilst he kept movin' he didn't stiffen up, but now his burns are drawin' an' he's helpless on his back . . . Yes, that was a smart move o' yours telephonin' to Sacramento for a nurse. Did you instruct her to come to Montague?"

Garland nodded.

"Then I reckon I'd better ride back tonight an' meet her there tomorrow afternoon. I'll run her out in my automobile and we ought to be back in Tantrum by dark. You meet us at the foot of the trail with horses and bring her up here. She'll give me a list of all the sick-room supplies she'll require, after I explain the case, and I'll bring them with me."

"Bring the cots and mattress and bedding, too. I'll borrow another horse to pack them up the trail. And speak to the nurse about food. She'll want something special, I imagine; in fact, it wouldn't be a bad idea for you to bring up quite a stock of provisions in your motor-car. I'll go good for the expense. I haven't any money with me, but—"

"**S**HO, boy!" Bentley held up his hand deprecatingly. "Bob Mason's credit's good with me." He rose, stretching himself. "Reckon I'd better git started if I'm to reach home tonight. Got a forty-two-mile ride ahead o' me; I'll leave word at ranger headquarters for the posse to come in, an' tell 'em the bird's got clear away into Modoc!"

"That will be mighty kind of you, but I doubt the wisdom of it. When Mason is well you're coming back after him—"

"I ain't, neither. He's goin' back on his own. He told me so."

"Do you think you can trust him, then? Remember, he broke his word of honor to the warden."

"I know. But he's sorry for that an' wants a chance to make his word good again. I wouldn't deny that chance to a Chinaman."

"Well, I sincerely hope he doesn't betray you. Nevertheless I think the wisest thing that could be done—since he's going back to San Quentin anyhow—will be to put him on a stretcher, carry him down the trail, put him in your car and take him down to the prison hospital, where he will receive proper care."

Sheriff Bentley looked at his companion in frank surprise. "Then why'd you send for that trained nurse?" he demanded.

"I thought the baby might require her services. That infant has been through a mighty stormy passage; it's been wet for hours, cold and hungry, and if it develops some infantile illness Monica Dale will be helpless."

"Whose baby is it? He told me something of his find but I didn't question him."

"Mason doesn't know. The automobile was upside down on top of the child's mother, so Mason couldn't look inside the car and read the license certificate, which bore the owner's name. He did make a mental note of the number on the license tag, but he's forgotten it."

"That's because he's sick and tired. He'll remember it when he gets better."

"Perhaps. Meanwhile, what do you think of my plan for sending him to the prison hospital? As you say, if he remains here, the strait-laced residents of this country will hear of it and it will spell scandal for the girl."

"I've talked it over with her. She knows what she knows and she's willing to take the chance. No, I'll not have that boy humiliated by sendin' him back under guard. That's final. I ain't afraid of him betrayin' me. Bein' convicted of a felony don't wipe all the decency out of a man, Ranger. Why, I recall once havin' to take a young feller from this country down to San Quentin to get hung for a murder. He'd bushwhacked his own uncle in a feud, the uncle being the one he suspected of havin' bushwhacked his brother—which I reckon he was right at that. Well, I'd known the boy since he was a pup and it didn't seem right to take him down on the train, with handcuffs an' leg-irons on him, an' every curious Tom, Dick an' Harry starin' at the boy. So I allowed I'd motor him down in my official car, figurin' he'd enjoy that one last ride—maybe. Well, we started, an' presently he complained about the hardware I'd put on him, so I unlocked it and threw it back in the tonneau an' we drove along, pleasant an' neighborly, until passin' through a patch of live-oaks he saw a gray squirrel run up a tree. He got me to stop the car."

"Sheriff Bentley, sir," he says, 'just to show you I'm not scairt, an' that I ain't noways nervous, I'll bet you fifty dollars I have in my pocket an' which I don't figure on gettin' to spend anyhow, I can take your gun an' shoot the head off'n that squirrel from here.'

**I** LOOKED. It was a good fifty yards, an' I figured he couldn't make the grade. 'You're on, son,' I says, an' hand him my gun, which he immediately pokes into my ribs.

"Now, then, Sheriff," he says, 'I'm sorry to say you're too trustin' for a peace officer. Gettin' hung don't appeal to me none whatever, so I reckon you'll just naturally have to get out an' walk. I'm goin' to borrow your car an' try to make my getaway. I'm hopin' I won't have to kill you, but if you object there ain't no other course open to me.'

"I looked at the boy an' I seen he meant business. I wasn't worried, though, because I wasn't quite the fool sheriff he thought I was. I had a little short thirty-eight gun in a holster inside the band o' my britches, an' of course the minute he turned his back on me to drive off I'd have potted him. But I didn't want to do that, Ranger. He was a nice boy. He had nice folks. So I just pushed the muzzle of the gun away from me and says to him:

"Now, son, you listen to me a minute. You lied to me to get my gun. You played a low-down trick on me, after I'd trusted you. I can understand how come you bumped your uncle off, which he was a low-flung old razorback anyhow, but how you can swindle a neighbor beats my time. Here I've took the irons off'n you an' I'm ridin' you to your death in my own car, just to save you from a lot of curious people, an' yet you pull a trick like this on me. How'm I ever goin' to explain how I lost a prisoner with handcuffs an' leg irons on him? Why, folks'll say I connived to let you go, an' I'll be disgraced. The county board of supervisors'll meet an' declare my office vacant an' all my life folks in my own country'll be pointin' the finger o' scorn at me. 'Tain't a square deal, son, so you gimme back that pistol or stick to your original proposition an' shoot that squirrel's head off.'

"Nothin' doin'," he says. His eyes was blazin'.

"Then you shoot me through the head so's I won't suffer, son," I says, 'because I'd rather be dead than disgraced.'

"He gives a big sigh an' hands me the gun, butt first. 'Reckon I don't want to kill nobody without cause,' he says quiet-like. 'Reckon, too, that squirrel's entitled to life, liberty an' the pursuit of acorns. I'm sorry. Let's be gettin' along.' An' he reaches back into the tonneau for the cuffs an' leg-irons, figurin' I'd make him wear them now. But I knew better'n that. Why, we stopped at the hotel in Sacramento that night an' he was as free as air. We went to the theater together, an' the next mornin' we strolled over to the governor's office together."

"He waited outside in the secretary's office while I was conferrin' with the governor, an' then the governor come out with me an' looked the boy over. The result is he agreed with me the feller was too fundamentally sound to hang, so he commuted his sentence to life imprisonment an' in two years he pardoned the boy. I told the governor the boy's uncle was no good an' wanted killin', an' he took my word for it."

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**C** "Tony, I think you're awfully nice," said Monica. "Husb, woman! Don't make love to me," Tony replied. "Pansy'll be scandalized."

Garland looked at the sheriff with new interest. Here was a plain man with an astounding natural understanding of human psychology and the wit to apply it. "I used to be a lawyer, Sheriff," he said quietly. "Not a well-known one, but one with a knowledge of the law and if you'll help me, Bob Mason will never go back to San Quentin. I'll defend him to the last limit of legal intrigue and chicanery, and I'm here to tell you that any cow-county

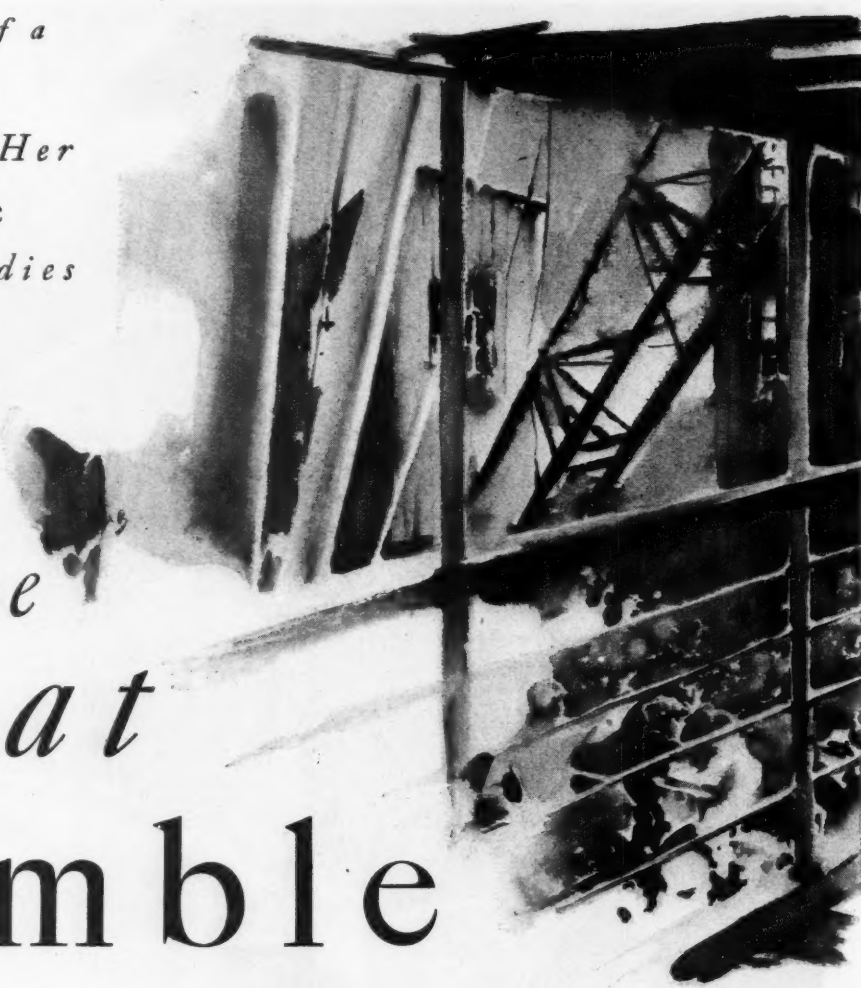
district attorney that opposes me will have to step lively to get a verdict. I still have my sheepskin entitling me to practise law in this state."

The sheriff reached over his great hand silently. "You're a sight better'n those that talk about you, son," he said. "You're right. We'll never let that boy go back to San Quentin. Some day next week I'm goin' to act on (Continued on page 195)



*The Story of a  
Woman  
Who Studied Her  
Marriage  
As a Man Studies  
His  
Business*

# *The Great Gamble*



"THERE is nothing accidental about a successful marriage," Abigail Somers said positively. "You might as well talk about the accidental success of a cantilever bridge!"

There was no immediate answer, although the three women who were with her on the wide porch turned to give the speaker speculative and interested glances, and Matilda Ransom, who was Abigail's sister, laughed with youthful incredulity.

Mrs. Ransom, their mother, a stout, sweet, bulky woman, sighed mildly.

"You can't say that, Gail," she presently protested. "Some folks never do hit it off together, and never would from now to Judgment! Others may have their little ups and downs, but at least they've got something in common."

"Every love-affair has certain elements, just as every bridge has," Abigail, who was a bridge-builder's wife and so found the simile convenient, persisted. "One has bad ground, another difficult transportation, another flawed steel or deficient water-power—every bridge is a fresh problem, and every marriage is a fresh problem. But there's nothing 'accidental' about pulling them through to a good finish. In South America, Russ almost lost his mind because his men were dying like flies of fever; in Alaska, we were snowed in and the supplies were five weeks late. If we go to Russia next winter it'll be something else—cave-ins or landslides probably."

"Or wolves following your droshky!" Matilda supplied frivolously as her sister paused.

"Well, maybe, *golubchik!*" Gail answered, laughing. "But it'll be something that will knock the very ground from under Russ's feet, you can be sure of that!"

"But, Gail," said the fourth woman, putting down her lemonade glass, leaning back in her chair and locking her hands behind her head, "it's simply ridiculous to argue that every marriage could be a success."

"No, and perhaps every bridge couldn't!" Gail stuck to her guns gallantly. "But what I say is that there's no accident

about a happy marriage. There's a lot of work and smartness and courage and patience about it, but there's a mighty small element of luck."

"I don't believe you," Helen Peters, none too happily married herself, said shortly. And she picked up the cards the women had recently abandoned and began loosely to shuffle them.

"And I don't believe you!" Matilda Ransom, engaged to be married, added promptly.

"Gail has always been lucky, and maybe she doesn't realize just how hard marriage is for some women," her mother's mild voice contributed. "Russ is one of the sweetest men God ever made, and things have gone well for them since the very beginning."

There was a short silence after the speech, broken only by the shouts from an invisible tennis-court near-by. "Deuce—your ad!" and "Game!" Pebble Beach dreamed in the afternoon stillness, the sea was satin-blue, the quiet air was scented with the good odors of eucalyptus and pine and pepper-trees.

The house in which the Somerses spent such rare holidays as came to their busy life was small, but it was a picturesque little haven for a weary engineer to find at the end of an arduous and dangerous undertaking, and winter or summer the mild California coast climate welcomed them back with blue skies and blue seas.

The walls were of adobe, plastered and painted a mild, distempered pink; oak-trees shadowed the patio with clear blue shade; a fountain spouted in a ring of blazing geraniums. Gulls walked and wheeled on the pink tiles of the flat roof, and passion-flowers hung purple on the gratings of the deeply sunken windows. Below the patio was a terrace, then great rocks, and then the sea.

Gail Somers, stretched in a steamer chair, staring up at a sky of soft and flawless blue, was lean, tawny of coloring, keen-eyed and firm of mouth and chin, in her late thirties. She had never been exactly a pretty woman, but there was a certain dash, a definite bright intelligence about her that was as arresting as beauty, and content and the happy responsibilities of wife and

By  
*Kathleen  
Norris*

*Illustrations by  
Leslie L. Benson*



**C** "Have you seen her?" Russell asked his wife every half-minute. "I might have missed her," Gail answered, her heart hammering with strange nervousness.

mother had etched a fine quality of distinction and character into her face.

Wisely, she made no attempt to rival her prettier sister or friends. The fair, straight, soft hair was simply swept about her thoughtful face, she used neither rouge nor lip-red, she was always herself—a pale, energetic, spirited and witty woman who had no need of the little artifices of less independent spirits.

"Girls," she said now suddenly, in an odd voice compounded between amusement and scorn, "how little you know! Think back over my seventeen years of marriage and ask yourselves if I've had such a sinecure—if I've had so much 'luck'!"

"Well, darling," her mother amended hastily, "of course you've been marvelously heroic about staying beside Russ, and he appreciates it—the dear boy. And of course you had that bad illness, when the second child came—"

"For the first two years after we were married," Gail said, as her mother paused on an affectionate clucking note, "we lived in a bridge gang camp on the northern shore of Lake Superior. The snow in winter was twenty feet deep in the drifts, there were about twelve other women in the place, about a hundred men, many of them French or French-Canadian. There were no books, no opera, no friends, no amusements or shops or clubs at all, and sometimes Russ was away from me for days at a time. I was alone the night Callie was born—except for a squaw who happened to come along with her own baby about twilight. Russ had planned to bring me in to a Chicago hospital the next week, but Callie thought differently. That," she added simply, "wasn't

so lucky—wasn't so easy!"

"I have always felt," her mother said firmly, "that if you had died, we would have had only ourselves to thank!"

"I'll never forget those long winter afternoons at Carteret," Gail went on musingly. "Sometimes I had a girl working for me for a few weeks, oftener not. Cal was colicky—my fault, I know now, but I had a lot

to learn then. And afterward she was croupy. Heavens, how frightened and nervous I was!"

"But that was Russ's first big success," said Mrs. Peters.

"That was Russ's first big success. He had promised me that we should have three months in England if the Carteret bridge went through according to contract, and we had them! That was heavenly. And then we went to Mexico, for the Dorado tunnel."

Her clear aristocratic face darkened; she slightly bit her lower lip and sighed sharply, narrowing her fine gray eyes.

"Three months before my second baby was expected," she said, "with Callie and two woman servants, I came in a mule wagon over the mountains, hoping to get to mother in Pasadena. But—something went wrong."

"I got a telegram, Helen," Mrs. Ransom told the visitor, with a reminiscent shudder, "that Gail was in an El Paso hospital—dying, they said. No news of precious little Callie. Never," the older woman added, in a pause, "shall I forget that day!"

Gail smiled. "If I'd been taken sick one day earlier, that would undoubtedly have been the end," she admitted. "As it was, by rushing doctors from all parts of the country, and blood transfusions and so on, they pulled me through. But that was April—and I walked slowly out of that hospital on my nurse's arm in July. The baby didn't live at all—a boy it was."

"And that's what you get when you marry an engineer!" Mrs. Ransom said lightly and tenderly.

"Russ came up in May," Gail recalled. "But he had to go right back to Mexico. And in August Callie and I went down."

"Back to that terrible place where there were revolutions and food shortages and tarantulas and goodness knows what all!" Mrs. Ransom supplied, with a little revival of an old resentment.

"Marriage!" Gail summarized it briefly.

"Marriage nothing!" her young sister protested with spirit. "Russ has never seen another woman in the world but you, and you've always adored him. Don't talk as if every woman could get out of it all you two have!"

"Russ has looked at other women," Gail said, smiling up at the softening sky. The sun was setting now behind the long arm of the wooded cliff, light streamed through the sprawled oaks, gulls wheeled piping against the rosy air.

"Russell Somers?" Mrs. Ransom asked sharply. "I don't believe you!"

"Russ," his wife continued, narrowing thoughtful eyes and speaking as if she merely thought aloud, "is a great admirer of feminine beauty. That's one reason why I've stuck to him so closely. All women go mad about him—he needs his good, plain, motherly wife as a balance-wheel. No, I mean it," she added seriously, even with a little vehemence, as young Matilda Ransom laughed incredulously. "Pretty women have an instant appeal for Russ, and he would be always getting himself into hot water if it were not for me. I keep his feet on the earth."

"And you have a beautiful boy and a beautiful girl," Helen Peters summarized it briskly. "And you travel—and you know interesting people—and you have a perfectly ideal life—everyone says you have! Yours is one of the marriages that was made in Heaven!"

"No one ever suspects just how impressionable Russ is," Gail said. "I didn't, I know. He and I had been married about three years—we were in London when I saw it first. One afternoon a girl came out of the hotel just ahead of us and jumped into a hansom, and we heard her say 'The Palladium.' Well, that was only a vaudeville house, and I was perfectly stupefied to have Russ say to me coaxingly, 'Let's follow her!' 'Follow her—why?' I asked. He hates vaudeville. 'Well, she is such a pretty, pretty girl!' he said—and he wasn't fooling either. His face was flushed and he looked terribly excited. We had tickets for a piano recital and we went there, but I couldn't think why Russ was so restless and unlike himself. He kept glancing at his watch. Finally it flashed over me—he wanted to go to the Palladium and see that girl come out! So I made some excuse to part from him and off he went like a shot."

"Oh, my dear," Mrs. Ransom said with a laugh, "all men are like that!"

"Not quite. The girl was obviously a nice girl, and so I wasn't worried," Gail resumed. "I asked Russ a day or two later if he had met her that day, and he looked as guilty as a boy. He said no, and at the time we didn't mention her again. But ever since, when anyone speaks of the Bardolph, he says, 'Will you ever forget the gorgeous girl who came out of there one day and went to the Palladium?' He's like that; he'll remember a girl—they're always quite young, pretty girls—from China, from some steamer deck in Naples, from a moving-picture in New York—women get him almost instantly, and while he has it, he has it hard. He'll speak of the ankle, or the neck, or the eyebrow of a girl he saw twenty years ago and never even spoke to!"

"Old, quiet, scientific Russ!" Matilda said, struck.

"SO THAT to hold him, bound hand and foot, for seventeen years hasn't been all roses," Gail said. But there was no real alarm or concern in her quietly happy voice. "I always say," she added, with her twinkling smile, "that a pretty woman only has twenty minutes' start of me, anyway! But I've studied the business of my marriage like any other business, and I'm just beginning to feel that it's a success. Russ is forty-six now, and Callie's coming to mean so much to him that it would be a mighty attractive woman who got her daddy away from her!"

"She's perfectly gorgeous—she looks like a woman, at sixteen," Mrs. Peters said.

"Callie? Yes, she's lovely. But do you know, as a baby Russ never paid any particular attention to her," Gail said. "He wanted a boy—I never in my life saw a face as stricken as his was when he came into the hospital at El Paso and realized that the baby that would have been a son was gone."

"Lucky you, that had another boy ten years later!" Mrs. Ransom said.

"Lucky?" Gail echoed, raising her eyebrows. "My dear mother, that—having Sonny—was the most heroic and difficult thing I ever did in my life! Lucky! I did it deliberately for Russ. I had been told, you know, that another baby meant death to me—oh, not by one doctor but by half a dozen! They told me it would be suicide."

"But one day when Callie was about nine I was going to have some child stay with us for a few weeks—was it your own boy, Helen?—I think it was. And Russ—so unemotional, so utterly unsentimental about most things—asked me not to do it. 'I somehow can't bear to hear a boy's voice around the place—knowing that we'll never have a boy of our own, Gail,' he said. It went through me like a knife."

"I thought the whole thing over, and I—took the chance. A few months later, when there was no question of my baby's being really on the way, I told him. Russ's heart almost broke. He couldn't face it—he wouldn't face it—it meant my life. I had to comfort him; he was like a madman for six months, and I was sick and scared myself."

"And then we had Sonny. The most wonderful thing that ever happened to me. I always think that when Callie came a baby was born, and when Sonny came a woman was. I went up to that operating room never expecting to see those halls again—it was snowing outside, I remember, and the world looked so sweet! When they told me, over and over and over, 'You have a little boy,' I only believed that I had fallen into one of my restless sleeps and was dreaming. But there he was, and there was Russ crying with joy, with his hair all wet and mussed. I had won."

GAIL'S voice stopped abruptly; she sat up, brought her feet to the floor, blinked away the tears that had misted her smiling eyes.

"No luck about that!" she said.

"Russ isn't the only builder in the family," Matilda remarked. "Well," her sister went on briskly, "it sounds conceited, told this way. But all I'm trying to express is that if you see marriage as a concrete thing, something to be developed like any other experiment, you do go about it rather differently!"

"I suppose," Mrs. Peters said thoughtfully, "you do. I was just wishing—"

She did not finish. The elderly woman, a widow, the young girl soon to be a wife, and the wife who had just spoken, all knew that Helen wished now that she had played her own cards a little more wisely, that she had not been quite so hasty in her treatment of Don Peters, who had had, after all, the makings of a man concealed under the spoiled boyish manner and self-indulgent habits.

"Just the same," Matilda said, rising and beginning to throw cushions into the seats they fitted and jerk the chairs about, "just the same, you got a good man, Gail, and everybody doesn't get a good one—and that's luck."

Callie, beautiful and yet oddly like her mother at sixteen, came into the patio, flushed and hot-cheeked from tennis, with a clumsy big college youth blundering after her; Sonny, the five-year-old lord of the household, escaped from his Chinese nurse and rushed out to his mother; the group broke up with the usual "Tomorrow, dear? Or tonight, if Russ feels like a rubber," and "Lovely luncheon, Gail—are you going to play around in the morning?"

Mrs. Ransom and her younger daughter were staying at the Lodge a quarter of a mile away; Mrs. Peters had a cottage a little farther on, among the pines. The four women had been friends all their lives; this chance interval when they could be together was delightful to them all.

"Aren't we having a wonderful summer!" Gail said appreciatively when, in the fragrant stillness of the sunset, she accompanied them to the patio's grilled eastern gate, and caught a glossy spray of waxen-flowered orange leaves to pin upon her sister's sleeveless white coat. But immediately her eyes fixed themselves upon a motor-car that had just stopped on the soft sandy road under the pines, and her face paled in sudden consternation.

"What is it—what is it?" the women began to say confusedly, smitten simultaneously with a sense of disaster. And instantly Gail had left the group and was running the short hundred feet between the gate and the road.

Two neighbors—Bob Henderson and Ridley White—men with whom Russ had presumably been playing golf all afternoon, had got out of the car. And between them, florid-faced, incoherent, his big lean body lax and almost helpless, his breath heavy—was Russ.

"He's all right now, he's all right, Mrs. Somers," Ridley White said. "He complained of a headache after the first nine and lay down on the club porch—said he didn't want to scare you, that he'd been feeling rotten for days. But he waked up kind of—well, maybe he's a little feverish—anyway, we've telephoned for Doctor Benson. I guess we'd better get Russ to bed as soon as possible."

Stricken, efficient, self-controlled, she moved through the terrible days that followed, the worthy wife of a big man. Gail did not break, although the dark shadow of death hung day after day close above the sunshiny patio, and although she was left alone to bear the hardest part of the strain.





**C** "Go play some Chopin, Gail!" her husband had pleaded. Gail's suspicion that he had wanted to get rid of her was confirmed when Miss Klingsberg said sweetly that the music was making him nervous.

Callie, beautiful in fright, was packed off to a girl's camp, little Sonny and his nurse established in his grandmother's suite at the Lodge; Russ's illness was infectious, and only his wife and his nurses took the risk.

Miss Elliott, the day-nurse, was a tower of strength. Nurses were not easily obtained in that particular neighborhood, but Miss Elliott was drawn away from a hospital operating room by the special intervention of Doctor Benson. Walking typhus was not common; the case would be educational for her, he said.

So she came to Pebble Beach—forty, plain, gigantic in stature and strength, tireless—to fling her twenty years of experience into the scales where Russ Somers's life hung trembling.

And Ingeborg Klingsberg came as night-nurse. Ingeborg was twenty-four, with pure gold, straight soft hair and deep-set

black eyes, and with a skin of roses and cream, and a soft little laughing voice that was like gold and roses and cream too.

It was a nursing case, the doctor admitted. And these two women who had never seen him before, and who received, after all, only some eight dollars a day for the priceless service, between them saved the life that meant all the world to Gail Somers.

Ingeborg looked like a doll, but she was masterly in the sick-room. Miss Elliott highly approved of Ingeborg, and so did Doctor Benson.

The crisis had passed, and Russ, drained and weakened and strangely young and helpless despite the new touches of gray in his black curly hair, had begun the long up-hill fight back to health before Gail really saw Ingeborg as a woman, as anything else but a machine that must be used (Continued on page 143)



☛ Above: *Bogged down in the desert.*  
Below: *Afloat on the River Tigris.*

# In the Garden

and they surveyed Cairo from the tea-table with eyes at once disillusioned and condescending.

"Civilized!" they said. "Might be Paris. Might be anywhere. Why don't you come to Bagdad?"

"Where is Bagdad?" we inquired. "And how do you get there?"

Well, it was easy enough, according to their idea. I dare say anything seems simple when you have just reached Egypt in an airplane, after engine trouble and having to spend a night in a hostile desert, covered with sand to keep warm. And then they were happy, too; the Arabs had not stolen the plane during the night. Apparently they did not even know it was around, for when the aviators wakened in the morning there it was, safe and sound!

Anyhow, they said that all one had to do was to go to Beirut in Syria, and start from there. The rest took care of itself. Some brave soul, fifteen months before, had decided it would be possible to take an automobile along one of the old camel caravan routes, and moreover had gone ahead and done it. Now it went regularly, a convoy of two or three cars, and it made in three days across the Syrian desert and northern Arabia what had formerly taken three weeks by sea and river to Bagdad. Three days! And the camel caravans take from one month to two!

Moreover, it was new country to the tourist, virgin country. New, that is, to the modern world. In the past the armies of the Chaldeans, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Romans, the Greeks and the Turks knew it well. Across it they used to travel on those vast excursions for plunder, slaves and tribute which were the ancient wars. Out of it also had come that strange delegation of Arabs to the then Christian city of Constantinople, in the name of a new and unknown prophet named Mohammed, calling on it to renounce the Holy Trinity and to believe in one God.

A new world, infinitely old.

**B**AGDAD really happened to us, like a toothache, or a punctured tire, or burglars. One minute we were comfortable, clean and civilized; the next we were on our way to the setting of Douglas Fairbanks's recent triumph, and were none of these.

It was all well enough for Mr. Fairbanks. He could romp around Bagdad all day, and at night he could climb his hill near Hollywood to a cold shower and a good dinner and Mary Pickford. But when evening came scuttling across the Tigris and brought with it a breath of air and a cloud of mosquitoes, we roused from a coma, climbed down our two flights of outside wooden stairs, looked away from the kitchen as we passed it, brushed a sparrow or two off the table in the dining-room and sadly, morosely ate what was put before us.

Bagdad is not as it was in Mr. Fairbanks's time.

On the terrace at Shepherd's one day we met two English aviators. They had, it developed, just flown over from Bagdad,



¶ The Camel Corps finds the murderers.

# of Eden

By *Mary  
Roberts  
Rinehart*

Five minutes later we were in Cook's office in Cairo, sending a telegram to the Eastern Transport Company at Beirut for reservations for the following Monday. And we were no more than back in our own hotel than the papers announced the holding up of the Eastern Transport Company's convoy by Bedouins the day before, about half-way across the desert, and the killing of the wife of the French vice-consul to Bagdad.

Our first fine flame of enthusiasm began to flicker; our faith in the magic carpet to die. A three-days' jaunt to the Euphrates and the Tigris was one thing; a flight between groups of murdering Arabs was quite another. And unfortunately just at that time I picked up a book which stated that the Bedouins of northern Arabia remained hostile to Europeans and were untrustworthy to the last degree.

However, the Head was doing a bit of reading also, and the Paris edition of the Herald reported the holding up of a Pullman train just outside Chicago and the successful looting of the passengers.

"Personally," he said, "I think we'd better stay out of America and be safe."

So in the end we went, crossing the Suez Canal at night at Kantara, the Gateway of the Desert, where begins the great caravan route across the Desert of Sinai to the site of old Babylon. The oldest caravan route in the world, it was along it that Moses guided the Israelites, and Napoleon led his



¶ A Persian fakir in Bagdad.

army into Palestine. Here too came Joseph and Mary, with the Infant, on the flight from Herod.

And now through its sands cuts the great canal, and laden camels stare at ships where once were only desert and thirst, and the bones of men and animals bleaching in the sun.

Across this strange waterway we were ferried in the moonlight, to expose the private contents of our two suitcases in the customs house, and in due time to settle ourselves into a waiting train on the other side.

We closed the windows, locked the compartment door and looked about us. Three seats on either side, the lifting of the arms provided us with two narrow, slippery leather divans, and on these couches, scantily provided with bedding, we spent the night.

We got some sleep now and then, arising to gather the bedding from the floor, and at five in the morning we were put off at Ludd. We had no notice; we were summarily ejected with most of our clothing in our arms. And in the cold gray dawn we finished our dressing on the station platform and waited for a train to Haifa, while the one we had left remained twenty-five minutes longer.

We had traveled in one night over the desert what it had taken the British army a year to cross.

Owing to a rule of long standing in the family that nothing (Continued on page 153)





**C** "I'll not fight you tonight," David said icily to Terry, "but tomorrow—"  
 "There's been enough of this schoolboy nonsense," flashed Sally.

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By Mrs. Wilson Woodrow

# Out of my House, Girl!

Illustrations by W. E. Heitland



"For two cents I'd throw you into the bay," said Sally.  
"There you are. That's what I call service," said David.

EVERY story has to have a beginning; and this one, properly or improperly, starts back in the days of black walnut and terrapin and 2:40 trotters—the swaggering, colorful, public-be-damned seventies.

Jim Fisk was in it, that blustering buccaneer of Wall Street who cornered a nation's gold reserve and paraded up Broadway in an open barouche, popping champagne for a bevy of French ballet girls.

Also in it was Gilsey Glidden who, in spite of his distinguished Knickerbocker pedigree, was one of Fisk's cronies, and a broker keen enough to be entrusted with some of the more important Fiskian transactions.

Through this association Glidden grew opulent. He had a country estate up the Sound, a house with a pipe-organ in it and a zinc bathtub—the sybarite! And he bought a steam-yacht to carry him to and fro from business. Those were hilarious parties he took back with him on summer evenings; Fisk among them, frothing wine over the edge of his glass and bawling ribald songs into the sunset.

Then something happened. It is difficult at this late day to be positive about details. But the story goes that Glidden double-crossed Fisk on one of their deals, or Fisk thought he did. Anyway, the results were the same.

When the smoke of battle cleared away Glidden looked like a picked chicken. His money was gone, his seat on the Stock Exchange, his steam-yacht. The only thing left him was the house with its gingerbread turrets and cornices, set on a grassy, tree-shaded point that jutted out into the blue waters of the Sound. And probably all that saved this was the bullet that sprawled Fisk down the stairway of the Broadway Central Hotel and ended forever his power either to benefit or to harm.

From one of the friends of his prosperity Glidden raised a loan on this property and endeavored to come back. But tragedy still lurked in the offing. He and the man who financed him, David Morton, while out sailing one Saturday, were caught in a squall off Greenwich and both drowned. Then it was discovered that for some reason, possibly to evade creditors, Glidden, instead of giving a mortgage on the place, had deeded it outright to Morton with the understanding, ratified by certain witnesses and a letter or two, that the deed was to be returned upon payment of the loan.

Morton had not recorded this deed; but his executors did and thereby laid the foundations for a lawsuit which later dragged through the courts like a second Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce. And pending settlement, the Glidden family, growing poorer and poorer, lived on in the old place, while the paint scaled from its walls and its turrets and cornices fell more and more into decay.

So that is why, in the present year of grace, Sally Glidden, granddaughter of the unfortunate Gilsey, stood in a little white-walled booth under a tree and sold hot dogs and sandwiches and ice-cream cones and ginger ale to the motorists who drove to the edge of the breeze-swept point and parked beside its crumbling dock to gaze upon the panorama of sparkling water and rocky islets and faraway low green hills along the other shore.

More often than not, though, the motorists—and it was astonishing how many men, young and old, there were among them—gazed at Sally instead of the landscape, and raptly informed the world that as a view she had everything else backed off the board.

Yet even the most pulchritudinous have moments of not looking their best; and on a certain humid June evening after a prolonged wrestle with a balky oil-stove, Sally's hair was straggling over her forehead and her face was flushed a deeper shade than she would have considered becoming. Her white cap was over one ear, and she had a smudge of soot across her nose and a smear of mustard on the front of her immaculate blouse.

"Darn you!" She leaned out over the counter of the booth to get a breath of fresh air and gave a vicious backward kick at the smoking stove. "For two cents I'd throw you into the bay."

And then she became aware that she had addressed her remarks directly to a young man who had paused before the stand. She had become so accustomed to the shadow shapes of the passing throng that, unless they clamored for hot dogs, she regarded them as part of the scenery, like the waves or the shore.

If David Morton III had given her a moment, she would have explained prettily; but he acted with impetuous promptitude.

"There you are!" He laid down two pennies with that ingenuous grin of his. "That's what I call service; saves the bother of getting into a bathing-suit and all that. Make it ninety-eight cents more and throw yourself in with me. You don't look as if it would hurt you any."

He meant merely that she seemed somewhat overheated; but Sally took it as a criticism of her smudged and untidy appearance. And to make things worse, he was impeccable in attire, cool and correct from head to foot.

The smoldering blaze in the depths of her pansy-blue eyes became an active conflagration. A scarred and villainous face with a cauliflower ear and an undershot jaw suddenly appeared



**C** "You try to marry Terry Blaine," David blazed, "and I will kidnap you at the altar." "Better make no promises you're not prepared to keep," said Sally.

over her shoulder. But she put out one hand as if to restrain this presence and called to someone who was behind David.

"Terry!" she said. "This person is annoying me. He insinuates that I need a bath."

Morton heard a rumbling roar, and before he could turn, he felt a hand like a ham at the back of his neck taking a firm grip on his collar. A ton seemed to hit him in the small of the back, and in the next second he was run down the steep bank and hurled into the water.

The motorists ceased to enjoy the sunset reflected in the liquid gold of the bay and howled with glee. David's first impulse when he got his breath was to flounder ashore and teach this hulking brute who had attacked him from the rear what a scientific beating was. He had been champion middleweight of his college, and had stood up creditably to certain professionals; but the size of the crowd at the water's edge and the yells and catcalls which followed made him decide to postpone his revenge. Every time he emerged, they would merrily throw him back. He was outnumbered; offensive tactics were absurd under the

circumstances, and he was not in a mood to provide any more slapstick comedy for them. So he swam as far out as his waterlogged clothes permitted, rounded the point, unseen in the growing dusk by the disappointed watchers on shore, and made an obscure and unheralded landing.

From there he took his dripping way to the lane where he had left his car and started at an illegal rate of speed for town.

"That's what you get, fool, for trying to play Don Quixote," he told himself. He felt in his pockets for his cigarets and found them afloat in his case. In vigorous and unpleasant words he consigned Glidden's Point and all it contained to the bottom of the bay. He had set out on a high, romantic enterprise; he was returning with all the romance and altruism drowned out of him.

He had just landed from Europe the day before and had learned then that the old lawsuit, an item in his inheritance of which he was only vaguely aware, had been decided in his favor. But he was shocked to discover that through this decision a young girl was to lose her ancestral home, all she possessed in the world, and he had hastened out this evening on a chivalrous impulse to



tell her that ethically, morally, spiritually he regarded the property as hers.

When he reached the rusty iron gates and saw beyond them a neglected drive winding through great stretches of park, dotted with splendid trees which kindly shielded the ramshackle old pile of a house, he pictured a wan girl sitting forlorn in a tangled garden. Cinderella! He saw himself advancing over the grass and eagerly, indignantly informing her that the opinion of a few fat-headed old judges was in no way binding upon him. She might recoil on learning who he was—an appealing figure of pride—but his eloquence would win her. In the end she would turn to him, cling to him, shedding grateful, happy tears on his shoulder.

Now as he whirled past those creaking iron gates he scowled at them. Leprous old dump! Cinderella—she probably matched the place and looked like something the cat had brought in—would have to wait for her glad news. He would do the decent thing, naturally; but not until he had settled his score with the rowdy crew she allowed on her—no, by golly!—on his place. That hot dog stand must go. He would make that a positive condition.

The next morning he had an appointment with his lawyer, Joab Watross.

"Well, David"—the dry and dapper counselor rubbed his hands together—"the court of appeals has affirmed the judgment in your favor in the Glidden action."

"May I ask," said David, "why that fool suit was ever brought?"

"Personally," Watross replied, "I think your mother was wrongly advised. But, be that as it may, events are shaping themselves so as to cause you the least possible embarrassment. I have a letter here from Miss Glidden stating that she is prepared to pay the original amount of the loan on the property, and will give a note to cover accrued interest and charges. A remarkable girl, David; wonderful force and character. You would scarcely believe it, but that young girl has earned this money herself, and by what was considered among her friends a most—er—eccentric venture. She started a little refreshment stand on the Point, and it has paid, it certainly has paid."

"Refreshment stand? That girl?" Morton almost shot out of his chair. "Is that Sally Glidden?"

"Ah?" Mr. Watross was mildly interested. "You have seen her? Then perhaps"—with one of his dry chuckles—"you understand one reason why her little booth is so popular. That girl cleared fifteen thousand from it last year, David. Great personal dignity too."

"Personal dignity is one way to put it."

David spoke with feeling. "But is she so frequently annoyed that she finds it necessary to surround herself with hired thugs?"

"Hired thugs?" Mr. Watross looked uncomprehending. "Oh, you probably mean old Peter, her handy man. Broken nose and cauliflower ear? Yes. Peter tried to be a pugilist in his younger days, but failed; and then he got religion, and now he would consider it a sin to swat a fly."

"But to get back to this matter of the Point. I take it that you instruct me to accept Miss Glidden's proposition. Fortunately for her the property has steadily increased in value, and she already has her plans made for turning the ground into profit. She tells me that she means to tear the old house down and build several modern dwellings on the estate. The meadows, I understand, she is leasing to a florist."

From childhood David's besetting sin had been obstinacy. He resented above all things the authoritative edict, and now his obsessing devil asserted itself. It struck him that both Sally Glidden and Watross were carrying things with too high a hand. What did this late-summer grasshopper think he, David, was—a complete figurehead?

"I am not sure yet, Mr. Watross"—with a high-nosed, supercilious air—"that I wish to give up this property. I may decide to stand on my legal rights and hold it."

Watross stiffened as he looked at his client over the top of his glasses. His expression was that of a rose-grower who has just discovered a new and exceedingly unpleasant variety of cutworm. "You have that privilege," he said coldly, "but you are already

so rich a man that this—er—Naboth's vineyard can mean very little to you, while to this girl it signifies everything. In view of many things, public opinion among others, for Westchester is peculiarly loyal to its own and will stand behind Sally Glidden to a man, you would do well to accept her proposal." He arranged the articles on his desk a little more precisely. "Give yourself time to think it over, David—a few days."

"I will do that, and let you know my decision. Good morning."

David picked up his hat and walked out. He had scored one. It would do Miss Sally Glidden no harm to occupy the anxious seat for a day or two before he turned over the place to her. But where was the exultation, the glow of victory which should have been his? He felt like a sneak-thief taking pennies from a child, or a gambler repudiating a debt of honor. He started to go back to the office and stopped. If he capitulated now old Watross would probably insist on managing the affair, and he proposed to do the managing himself—tell her to go ahead and make any arrangements she chose. Incidentally he would find out who the ruffian was that had pushed him into the bay and knock his block off.

He remembered that he had promised Mrs. Sexton, an old friend of his mother's, to dine with her at Rye that evening and go on later to a dance at a country club. Maybe Sally would be there.

So with peaceable intentions only, he drove out once more along the shore road at sunset. Mrs. Sexton, who resembled a huge marshmallow draped in black chiffon and pearls, welcomed him warmly; and as they sat in her charming dining-room with the sweet salt air of the Sound stirring the flame of the candles on the table and wafting the fragrance of roses and new-mown lawns about them, he began to see the funny side of his welcome to his native heath, and by the time the coffee was brought, he was ready to tell it as an amusing story to his hostess.

But the lady did not give him a chance. She was in the habit

of mapping out a course of action, a conversation beforehand, and she never forgot that her grandfather had been an ambassador to one of the smaller foreign courts, and that tact and diplomacy were her natural heritage.

"You are not thinking of running off to the ends of the earth, are you, David?" She adopted the circuitous approach, diplomacy according to Hoyle. "Because I can lay my hands on the most adorable house for you out here. Just ready for you to step into, and that will settle everything so satisfactorily."

She emphasized "everything" just enough for David to become suspicious; he felt a perverse desire to hurl a small bomb.

"But, Mrs. Sexton, I already have one place out this way."

The smile was swept out of her eyes although she held it firmly on her lips.

"You dear boy!" Mrs. Sexton's tone was sympathetic and indulgent. "That unfortunate incident yesterday. We have all heard about it." David winced. "Of course if either Sally or Terry Blaine had known who you were—"

"Terry Blaine!" There was an

(Continued on page 124)



"I love you, Sally," David whispered. "I fancied, sir, you might need this," said the butler.

# The Last Nose of Summers

SOMEWHERE in "The Pains of Pleasing" by Mrs. Sarah Stickney Ellis, published about seventy-five years ago, there appears the following sentence:

"Those who live on vanity must expect to die of mortification!"

Perhaps the choicest exemplification of this terse maxim I have ever witnessed was the fall of Montague Summers, once the most refulgent star in the firmament of musical comedy. The theatrical world still chuckles at the manner of his passing, but I doubt if Mr. Summers himself is yet aware of the motive behind the *coup de main* that sent him to his doom.

Should this narrative chance to fall into his hands he may not be pleased, it is true, but he will at least be enlightened.

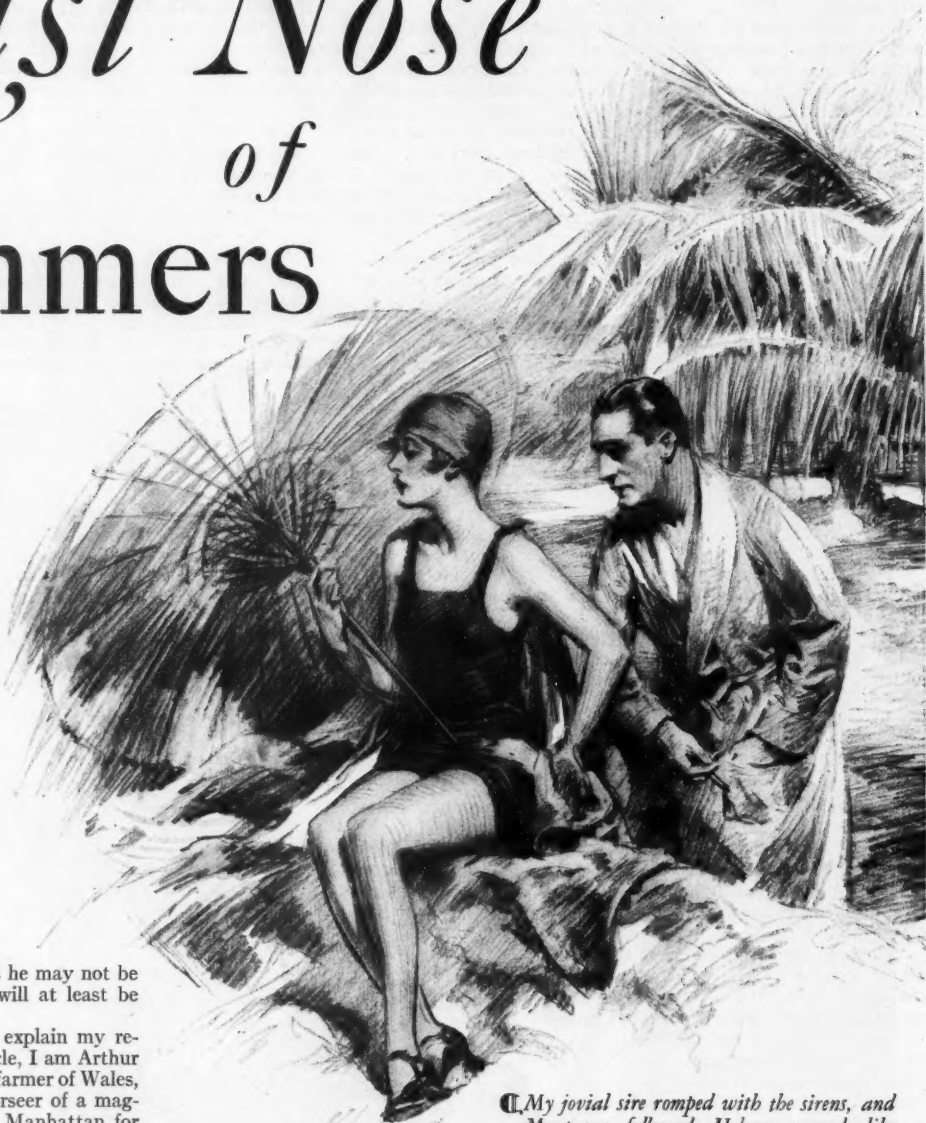
To introduce myself and explain my relation to the Summers debacle, I am Arthur Justin, quondam gentleman farmer of Wales, New York, and latterly overseer of a magnificent real estate office in Manhattan for the barter of my father's last holdings in Florida. My parent once assured me that as a salesman I was an excellent agriculturalist, adding his doubts of my ability to dispose of life-preservers in a shipwreck.

However, father's sarcasm was wasted on me, gentle reader. I was walking in the clouds and beyond such mundane pursuits as the sale of Florida lots to the adventurous, a business about as exciting as the daily routine of a goldfish. Frankly, I was head over heels in love with Helene Howe, proprietress of the Mayfair Beauty Shoppe on upper Broadway. It was the enchanting Helene's ambition to open a chain of such temples of pulchritude under the trade-mark "Mayfair," this being an obeisance to Michael Arlen, of whose works she was greatly enamored. I sought to persuade my opulent father, Calvin Justin, to advance the necessary capital—no mean feat!

For although in the pursuit of pleasure my red-blooded Nordic sire was without a peer as a spender, he had become annoyingly cautious in the matter of investments suggested by me. Father did not think the financial returns from a beauty salon would warrant his risking any sizable amount of money in the operation of a number of them.

One day accompanied by Helene and armed with a formidable array of facts from no less an authority than the Department of Commerce, I called on father at the Fitz-Charlton. We were ushered into my progenitor's gorgeous suite of rooms by his valet, whom he had dubbed Miami as a mark of respect for the source of his income.

94



My jovial sire romped with the sirens, and Montague followed Helene around like a pet dog—until I longed to choke him.

"Sit down, children!" father greeted us cheerily. "Helene, you are growing more devastatingly beautiful every hour. Arthur, you are a lucky boy. Miami, three highballs!"

"We do not drink," I interposed, gazing dazedly at his brilliantly colored dressing-gown, the plus-fours peeping out beneath it, his waxed mustache, his absurdly elongated cigaret-holder and his inexplicably ruddy cheeks.

"Your flaws are well-known to me, my boy," rejoined father. "I am ordering for myself and the lady. The third libation we will keep for such an emergency as your swooning, when I refuse whatever demands you are about to make on my check-book!"

He pushed forward cigarets for Helene and motioned me to an ornate humidor of clear Havanas. The valet appeared noiselessly with the drinks and father drained his with gusto.

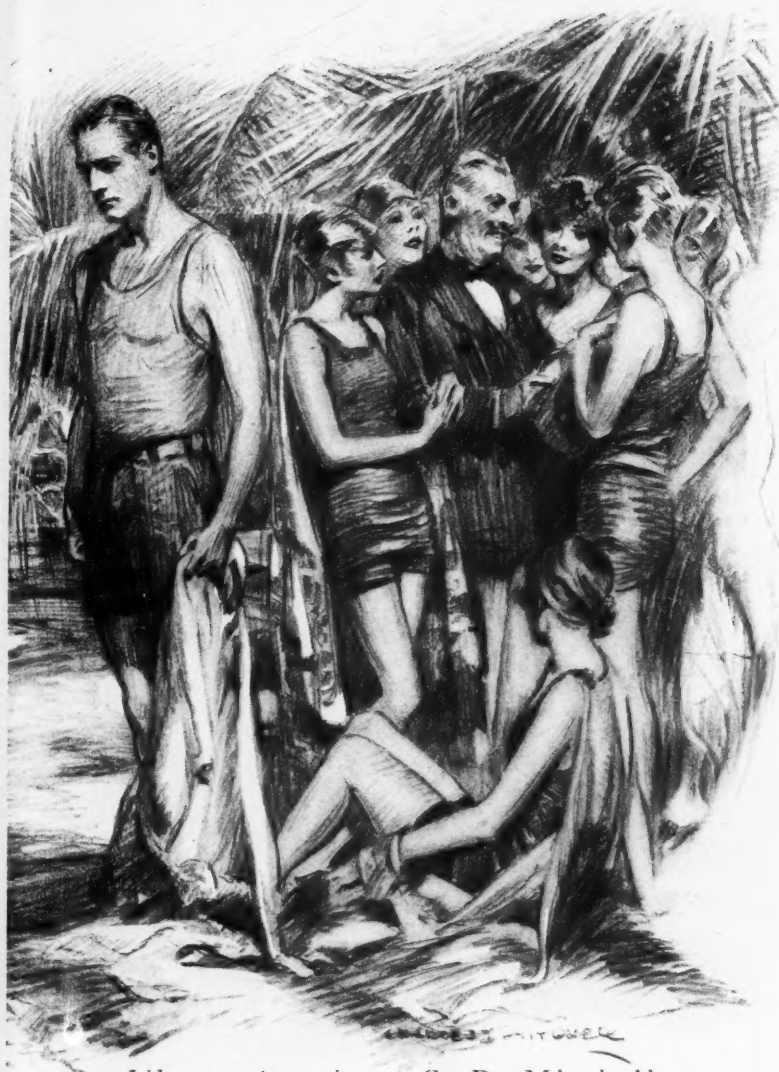
"Father," I began, clearing my throat, "I have here some figures I am sure will interest you in financing the chain of beauty shops we have talked about."

"Blah!" he exclaimed inelegantly, snapping his fingers. "That skin game, eh? Well, you might as well try to interest me in a string of frankfurter stands. I cannot be annoyed with thomascology—my operations are on a gigantic scale and—"

"You will find this gigantic enough, if you will listen," I interrupted. "Do you know that the women of the United States spend an average of thirty millions of dollars a day for beauty

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Illustrations by C. D. Mitchell

treatments and preparations, or a staggering total of ten billion dollars yearly?"

"Not counting tips," murmured Helene. "You'd better declare yourself in, Mr. Justin!"

"More than eight million dollars was spent last year for hair coloring alone!" I declaimed, consulting my memoranda, while father twiddled his thumbs and peered at me. "Five years ago there were forty-five hundred beauty shops in the United States—today, there are nearly thirty thousand!"

"And the percentage of profit in this—eh—industry?" father inquired.

"Enormous!" cried Helene and I in chorus.

Father regarded us intently for a moment with pursed lips, thoughtfully stirring the ice in his glass. At last the oracle spoke.

"I—eh—while I am not quite sold on your proposition," he said, "I will admit I am—eh—somewhat impressed. However, before anything else, I wish to return to the great open spaces of Florida, where men are realtors, and dispose of my land while the gold-rush is on. Arthur, suppose you and Helene accompany me. You will not only have a pleasurable vacation, but you might look over possible sites for a beauty shop in Miami. Eventually, why not now?"

"Mr. Justin, you're a dear!" exclaimed Helene. "I'd just love to witness Florida—they make such gorgeous grapefruit down there. But I'll have to ask my brothers' permission."

"Well, run along and ask 'em!" said father briskly, glancing at his watch and rising. "My dancing teacher is due at any moment. One more lesson and I will execute the wickedest Charleston in New York, she says."

"Father, is it possible you are having a woman instructor come to your rooms?" I said.

"Get out of here, you darned prude, or papa spank!" grinned father.

"Honestly, your father just slays me!" giggled Helene as we stepped into the elevator.

But I felt quite embarrassed. Father was incorrigible!

Helene's two brothers, Aubrey and Jack, had graciously accepted me as her knight and I found them a source of endless divertissement. Both were young, tall and handsome and inordinately proud of their beautiful sister, but there all resemblance ceased. Aubrey was slender, with delicately molded features and of a singularly retiring, even abashed manner. He blushed on occasion—the occasion usually being one of his brother Jack's spicy stories. Aubrey had held the portfolio of hair-dresser in Helene's beauty parlor until he abandoned cosmetology for the chorus of a Broadway musical show. His clever dancing won him instant attention and his name soon appeared programmed with the principals.

The exact opposite of Aubrey, Jack was a strapping husky, a he-man of the first water, a trenchant slangster, man of the world and witty raconteur. He had a congenital antipathy to manual labor of any nature and was an irresistible charmer of the fair sex. By profession, Jack was a vermin exterminator, that is to say, he powdered apartment-houses, private homes and hotels with an insecticide procured at the druggists' for a paltry sum and charged a hundred dollars and up for his services. He explained that he was attracted to his bizarre calling for the reason that it did not interfere with his "resting." The picaresque Jack was not above substituting salt, corn-starch, flour or talcum powder filched from his sister's shop when short of funds to purchase ant poison. Withal, Jack had an ingratiating personality that few could resist, among the few being the gentler Aubrey, whom he was perpetually ridiculing and who in turn was constantly irritated by Jack's breeziness.

Father was host at a theater-party on the eve of our trip to Florida, Helene's brothers having approved the journey. The play was the closing performance of "Well, Well, Wilhelmina!" in which Aubrey appeared and which my parent had backed in a moment of weakness for a lady who—but no matter! Its run on Broadway had been long financially successful and father was in gay spirits at supper after the show.

"I hate to leave you alone, Jack," solicitously remarked Helene over the coffee.

"Dry your tears!" her brother returned coolly. "I'm goin' to cop a sneak for Florida with you and I don't mean mayhap!"

"Be your weight!" snapped the lovely Helene. "I don't need a chaperon!"



"Don't get common," admonished Jack debonairly. "I ain't goin' as your guardian angel. I got plenty business there."

"You're dizzy!" Helene sniffed, with a sarcastic grimace. "Just what business would a vermin exterminator find in one of Florida's ritzy resorts?"

For answer, Jack solemnly pulled a map from the pocket of his dinner jacket, spread it out on the tablecloth and pointed to a dot with his spoon.

"What business would a vermin exterminator have in Florida, hey?" he snorted. "What's the name of that body of water?"

Helene bent over the spot he indicated on the map, gave a start and then burst into hysterical laughter.

"For heaven's sakes!" she gasped weakly, her hand pressed to her side. "There's a place down there called *Cock Roach Bay*!"

"Add that up!" said Jack, glancing triumphantly around the table.

Father's raucous guffaws drew everyone's attention to us and Aubrey glared at his grinning brother.

"Heavens, what a delectable dinner conversation!" exclaimed Aubrey disgustedly. "Mr. Justin will think we all came up from the gutter."

"And brought the gutter up with us," added Helene, hastily becoming sedate. "What will you do, Aubrey, if we all go South? I can't leave you by yourself in New York."

"You can try it, can't you?" sneered Jack. "We can put little Egbert Stacom here in a boardin'-school or the like till we get back."

"I believe I have solved that problem," father interjected. "To overcome the—eh—sales resistance during my proposed real estate campaign, I am going to bring 'Well, Well, Wilhelmina!' to Miami for a few weeks. So Aubrey will be very much in our midst."

"What a tough break for us!" remarked Jack.

"Hush your mouth!" Helene reproved him and then turned to father with a dazzling smile. "Mr. Justin, you're just a nice, big Santa Claus," she told him softly.

"Eh—I would rather you would call me Cal," fatuously grinned father.

Then I rose hurriedly and asked Helene if we might dance.

Three days later we all arrived in beautiful Miami, the super-resort, the new Eldorado, the realtor's paradise, "the Wonder City of the Everglade State" as father referred to it. In 1896, two dwellings; in 1926, an estimated population of more than seventy-five thousand! Ponce de Leon, Biscayne Bay, grapefruit, real estate offices, pineapples, tarpon, king mackerel, real estate offices, bluefish, alligator farms, Fort Dallas, real estate offices, squatters' shacks and gorgeous hotels, coral reefs, real estate offices, subdivisions naively named for the famed cities of its bitterest rival, California, viz., Hollywood, San José, Beverly Hills, et cetera. Architecture gone amuck, Spanish moss, sand, "at that price this corner's a steal," real estate offices, billionaires, Babbitts, movie stars, society, near-society, real estate offices, yachts, aquaplanes, tourists, bungalows, climate, royal palms, horse-racing, gold-diggers of both sexes, real estate offices!

We put up at father's hotel, a glittering marble palace such as might have been built by a Nero as a *tour de force* in extravagant gestures. Helene and I gave ourselves over to the exploration of the city, while father at once threw off his riant mannerisms, marshaled his army of salesmen and plunged into the business of selling lots. The theater claimed most of Aubrey's time and the sporting element all of Jack's.



Q "Women spend ten billions yearly for beauty treatments,"

At the latter's suggestion, we attended the races at Hialeah one afternoon, that apparently being customary in Miami. Before each race, Jack circulated about the paddock, the lawn and the club-house holding mysterious conferences with equally mysterious-looking individuals. His busy pencil made cabalistic marks on his program and he rushed back to us with what he designated breathlessly as "shoo-in's" "hot tips" and "hog killings." Helene, Aubrey and myself all bet on Jack's selections and every horse he picked for us finished far back in the ruck. By the time the prancing thoroughbreds paraded to the post for the last race, Helene's and Aubrey's continuous barrage of bitter sarcasm had reduced Jack to perspiring silence. Oddly enough, my usually prodigal father made no wagers at all.

Helene was morosely consulting her program.

"Honestly, this is murderous!" she exclaimed. "I'm three hundred and fifty loser on the day!"

"And I have lost two hundred dollars!" pouted Aubrey, with a reproachful glance at Jack.

"Aw, go buy yourself a lollypop!" his brother grunted savagely. "I'm on the nut for plenty myself. Cheer up, I seen things go on as bad as this for days—and then get worse!"

"Hurrah for me!" Helene cried abruptly, looking up from her program. "Here's where I knock the books for a Chinese refuse container. I've got an eighty-four carat hunch!" She fumbled



I declaimed. "And the profits?" father inquired. "Enormous!" cried Helene and I.

excitedly in her hand-bag and produced a roll of bills. "Jack," she said, "here's a hundred dollars—the last of the Mohicans. There's a beagle in this scamper called Beauty Clay and I want you to put that money on him for me."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Jack turned an affected, falsetto laugh on his charming sister. "Because you run a beauty joint you wish to bet on Beauty Clay, hey? That's a pay-off! Why don't you lay your last yard that Niagara Falls turns into gin every night? You'd have more percentage. That collie you crave ain't win a race since they first throwed a saddle on him."

"See if I care!" returned Helene calmly. "I want my money to ride on his nose. I feel lucky!"

"And you talk dizzy!" declared Jack. "Don't be a umpchay all your life—get smart. Now, they got a sleeper in this dash by the name of—"

"Do what I tell you and see what happens!" interrupted Helene sharply. "My guess is as good as yours. Those funny feed-box specials you plied me with all afternoon have lost me everything but my girlish figure. You pick a winner? Don't make me giggle, Jack—you couldn't pick a rose out of a bed of cabbage."

"So's your old gentleman!" growled Jack, stuffing the hundred dollars in his pocket. "I'll tell whoever's listenin', this is a typical case of throwin' money to the furnace."

horses. At the head of the stretch the favorite's nose poked itself in front of the others who were bunched thickly behind, with Beauty Clay "Nowheres!" as Jack laconically put it.

Fifty yards from the finish, Beauty Clay's rider went to the whip and, unleashing a dazzling burst of speed that thrilled even the jaded "regulars," Helene's choice shot through on the rail and won by a goodish half-length!

"Well, I'll be a cup of coffee!" snarled Jack, violently skimming his program out over the surging crowd.

"Hey, hey!" Helene exulted, pinching her brother's arm. "So I'm Dumb Dora, eh? Bound down there and collect my plunder for me, Big Boy, and if you phone me tomorrow, I'll give you another winner! By the way, how much did I take the books for?"

Jack was strangely silent and stood up in our box irresolutely, fumbling with his hat.

"Congratulations, Helene!" smiled father. "Beauty Clay closed at twenty to one, so your hundred-dollar investment has returned you two thousand in less than two minutes."

"That's what you think!" muttered Jack. "Well, I might as well get matters over with. I know I rate a sock in the whiskers, Helene, but I only done what I thought was for the best. I—"

"Stop stalling and get to the point!" commanded Helene in a strained voice, rising and confronting (Continued on page 162)

He left the grand stand and was swallowed up by the milling throng on the lawn—a booming surf of colorful humans drawn from their various pursuits by the lure of the great god Chance and the thrill of the sport of kings. The atmosphere of tense excitement, "Who do you like in this race?" an ocean of bobbing straw hats, white flannels rubbing against worn corduroys, brilliant hued parasols, glittering jewels, provocative glances, silk stockings, shirt-sleeves and *de rigueur* jackets, too-loud laughter and dumb despair, hard-faced, insistent touts, imperturbable "form" players, cold-eyed book-makers, casual detectives, ex-jockeys, trainers, owners, soft drink vendors, plungers, pikers, manikins in kaleidoscopic silks astride glossy mounts—here and there in this garish milieu, a lover of the thoroughbred horse.

A breathless moment while the field reared and wheeled at the barrier, then Helene's fingers dug into my arm as the webbing shot up and a dozen delicately attuned machines of flesh and blood, of high courage and hair-trigger nerves, thundered down the track in a cloud of dust. "They're off!" The roar of the crowd was deafening, the air itself a bedlam of howls, cheers, groans and frantic admonitions to the straining midguts perched on the very necks of the speeding



☐ Above: The Talley home in Kansas City. Below: Marion Talley 19 years ago.

**M**ARION TALLEY is a little nineteen-year-old girl with the world at her feet wondering what it is all about. The most brilliant audience the Metropolitan Opera House ever held hung on the golden notes of this plump corn-fed child so vibrant with health and girlish freshness.

Tickets sold for as high as \$300 each. The famed Horseshoe Circle sparkled with customary jewels. The Social Register was there *en masse*. It was the night of nights for the girl from Kansas City who had achieved where a hundred thousand failed.

A special train load of home folks were in the audience. Her father, a railroad telegrapher, was at his key in the wings to flash her triumph home over a special wire. Here were the ingredients of high-powered success drama as typically American as the seventh inning stretch.

The slight lift of the conductor's baton fairly pistoled a silence. And little Marion Talley with eyes perilously bright with tears made her debut. It does not matter that Marion Talley awakened next morning to greet the supertechnical scorn of New York critics. She had her Big Moment. Those who know say she will live to confound them.



☐ Marion Talley 5 years ago.

# To Those Who *Will Try* To Be *Marion Talley*

Marion Talley comes from my neck of the woods. I know her rolling country and I believe I know New York, and while I cannot serve as a competent music critic, it is my opinion had she come to the Metropolitan bearing the "European stamp" and perhaps a marmoset in her sleeve she would have received different treatment.

New York is big enough to be smugly indifferent to the rest of the country. Kansas City to many Manhattanese is a wild and woolly cow-town on the hot-skied prairie where they shoot from both hips and the visitor is greeted as "Stranger." The metropolis often does not realize that were there no five-and-ten in Kansas City, Omaha, et cetera, there would be no Woolworth Building on Broadway.

Marion Talley suffered because of the old-fashioned back-fence neighborliness of her home town. Stiffly starched New York does not react favorably to such unbending gestures from the outland.

The Metropolitan, as everyone knows, is a hotbed of professional jealousy. The slightest spark may touch off a temperamental explosion. I have the word of William J. Guard, who attends to such matters for the Metropolitan, that only a bare announcement of Marion Talley's debut was sent out to the New York press.

But Kansas City, with pardonable pride, fairly burst with enthusiasm. Bugs Baer with paragraphic pungency epitomized it with a column headed "K. C. at the Bat." Special trains thundered into New York from Kansas City and other points west. An army of newspaper and press photographers descended like locusts. They whooped it up in rodeo fashion and the impudence of it, I believe, left New York a little cold.

The critics failed to see the romance of the little American girl from the plain, homespun American family who unlocked the golden gate at which thousands had beat so vainly after the long travail. They combed the lexicon to bewilder her with the high-blown technical verbiage of their craft. She came—ha, ha!—from Kansas City.

I once believed the most tragic figure I ever saw was in the Grand Central Station. Through the milling, jostling crowds in the great rotunda came a slinking youth of perhaps twenty. He was flanked on either side

by a husky man with the unmistakable derby and square-toed shoes of Central Office.

They were braceleted together with steel. From out of the crowd darted a faded little woman in black to give the youth a pecking kiss. And then she stood watching him through the



# By O. O. McINTYRE

gates for the train to Sing Sing while she mopped her eyes with a handkerchief rolled into an anguished ball.

But to me she is no more tragic than the little figure of the bewildered Kansas City girl the day after her Metropolitan debut. She had been untrussed by those she loved and those who loved her. Her career, of course, is not ended. To the credit of the Metropolitan, it has not lost one iota of its faith and firmly believes Marion Talley will sing her way to even greater heights.

The real tragedy of Marion Talley's debut is to come. Thousands of obscure homes bloom with a new hope. Thousands of potential Marion Talleys are girding themselves for the futile fray. Homes will be mortgaged, bent mothers and work-worn fathers will renew the unending sacrifices to send their daughters to New York and abroad to duplicate Marion Talley's success.

One of the best American short stories was written about ten years ago by Charles R. Barnes, who unhappily quit literature for business. It was a chapter from real life based on an incident Barnes had seen in Manhattan.

It was the story of a small-town girl who had been encouraged to believe she had a voice. The usual parental sacrifice was made and she came like a sheep to the wolves. There are honest teachers of voice culture in New York and there are many not so honest. She fell in with one who came under the latter classification. Under his tutelage she would reach the Metropolitan. So she was told and there began the unremitting toil of years with the consequent parental pinching back home.

She did not reach the Metropolitan but she did reach a tawdry Tenth Avenue cabaret—the same disillusioning path hundreds just as promising before her had trod. And one night in the fetid muck of stale beer and cigar smoke

she saw the teacher sitting at one of the café tables. It came her turn to sing to the ribald crowd. In her cheap spangled dress she walked directly to his table and eyed him coldly. Then she said, "Meet your promising little singer and don't laugh."

And she sang to him a mawkish ditty of the period in a pathetic voice husky from gin and inveterate cigaret addiction.

It is not a broad prediction to assert that many who are already starting out for the same laurels Marion Talley has won will meet a similar disillusionment.

Marion Talley's success did not come from years of rigid training. It is true she studied three years abroad, but her voice—like that of Caruso, Melba and the latter-day Jeritza—was a natural gift. She sang with the freedom and naturalness of a nightingale.

I happen to know of many pitfalls awaiting the ambitious singer of New York. Enthusiasm retards her progress. Scores of conscienceless creatures make her easy prey.

Here is what happened to the daughter of a friend who lived in a city where I once worked. Her father, oddly enough, was, like Marion Talley's, a telegraph operator. He worked nights and on Sundays in those days that she might live in comparative luxury.

She fell in with several musical jackals who taught her not to sing but to bray. A pleasant but not overpromising natural voice was ruined. An "impresario" took her in hand for her "debut." It would require \$1,000 for the preliminary expenses, the hire of the hall, advertising, publicity and the innumerable et ceteras.

Her father, almost mortgaged to the hilt, managed to raise the last \$500 on his home. The other \$500 was secured from 200 percent usurers. It was a glowing picture the "impresario" painted until he got the money. The big hall would be filled, all the famous critics would be there and the Metropolitan would be after her to sign on the dotted line.

In the rather spacious hall on her "debut" night the curtain arose on an audience of twenty-seven. Eighteen were the singer's personal friends who came on complimentary tickets. The remainder—save exactly three tickets sold at the door—came as guests of the "impresario," who incidentally never showed up.

Of course, there were no critics there. First-string musical critics do not attend such "debuts." Not a line appeared in a New York newspaper. It was fortunate the young lady was made of sterner stuff than most mortals. She was crushed, but not hopelessly. Today she is working twelve hours a day in a humble calling to help her father pay off the debts. She never tried to sing again.

Somehow I think of her when I think of the thousands of songbirds, inspired by Marion Talley, preening their wings for the operatic flight.



Marion Talley today—making her debut (at 19) as Gilda in "Rigoletto" at the Metropolitan.

# A Harmless Flirt

A Story  
Who Wanted  
Cake and

Illustrations by



CLARA COBBETT was a girl who made everyone happy, very much including herself. She could not but be happy because she had those three things essential to happiness, a good digestion, a none too active imagination and a positive consciousness of her enjoyment of pleasures at the moment of their occurrence and not years afterwards; she had also some private means.

When she was quite a young girl she had discovered that people respect you if you show them that you know exactly what you want and do not intend to be deterred from getting it by any silly scruples about other people's wishes. Of course this may lead to what some people call selfishness, but people are apt in general to call it selfishness in others when their own personal selfishness has been disappointed. This also Clara discovered.

She was aware further that your friends and acquaintances estimate your character by your behavior to themselves and not by your abstract characteristics and that if, therefore, you flatter a little, listen to what people have to say and trade on their small weaknesses you will be considered generous-hearted, noble-minded and acutely penetrating.

Clara was of no very definite age, pretty in a flaxen, pink and kittenish manner and ever so much wiser than she looked. She went on this Egyptian expedition not because she wanted to see Egypt but because she thought it would be an admirable opportunity for superior flirtations, superior because the ordinary common or garden tourist could not afford the Egyptian expedition; it was expensive and appealed in the main to Americans, to whom of course expense was no object. Clara had never known any Americans well.

Clara's flirtations were of the most innocent sort, but give her time enough and she certainly left her mark behind her. Because she was no fool there had been perhaps at the beginning of things a genuine real Clara capable of deep feeling, but in this life one thing is certain, that you cannot have your cake and eat it; and Clara, having thrown deep feeling over the mill, determined to give it no further thought.

She set out for her Egyptian tour in the highest possible spirits; nothing aggravated her, nothing irritated her. Another thing that life had taught her was that it was always a waste of time and good health to lose your temper, that it never paid although at the moment you might seem dramatically to dominate the situation, so she never lost her temper, never showed

people that she thought them foolish, never allowed anyone to doubt but that they were as charming, clever and beautiful as in their best moments they hoped they were; and in this she was not insincere.

She had found that one's estimates of other people depend very largely on the choice that one makes among their qualities and defects. Say that someone was dogmatic, selfish but with a delightful sense of humor; concentrate on the humor, call them strong-minded and you get along with them excellently. Of course Clara was never with anyone for lengthy periods, but she believed it to be the secret of life, whether married or single, never to be with anyone for more than a month at a time.

It happened, therefore, that in the journey from Victoria to Alexandria she made many friends. It was on the boat that she discovered Horace Tripp and Edward Mellon, the one young, gay and elegant, the other shy, stout and romantic. Horace, who was gay, suited her lighter moods, but Edward was most delightful after dinner when it wasn't so cold as you might have expected and the moon flung a largess of silver coins upon the slightly rippling water. They were both joining, she found, the Rameses, her own boat that started from Cairo. By the time that they reached Alexandria she had established admirable relations with both of them and she had done more than this—she had charmed to her side Alice Murray, who was very fond of Horace, and Mrs. Bellamy, a widow, who was not at all indifferent to Edward; this, as every woman will know, proves at once how very clever Clara was.

She was assured then that her trip up the Nile would be delightful; it would be interesting because there would be some scheming and diplomacy needed to prevent Edward from becoming too seriously attached and proposing. That was the one thing of which she had an absolute horror, that some man whom she liked very much indeed would propose to her because, so kind-hearted was she, she might at that romantic moment accept him and marriage would be disastrous.

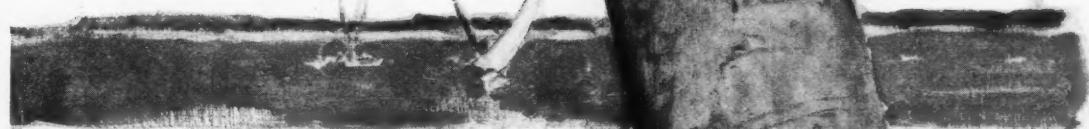
Against just that little extra impulse of sentiment she was not in herself quite securely defended; given a romantic evening, a charming man, pressure of hands and that tender, dog-like appeal in a masculine eye, she might wake up the next morning to find herself pledged to matrimony, and all that delightful life of freedom and universal amiability must be foregone. However, she thought that she would be able to manage Edward.

Her first vision of Cairo sadly disappointed her. They had arrived at Alexandria in the afternoon and should have taken the Alexandria-to-Cairo journey in all the beautiful purple glow of an Egyptian evening, but the officials were so tiresome, the Customs were so lengthy and confused that the Egyptian world was veiled in darkness before they started. There followed on this disappointment desperate confusion at the hotel.

of a Woman  
to Have Her  
Eat it too

James E. Allen

By  
Hugh  
Walpole



Shepherd's had been for months to Clara synonymous with splendor and romance. It was very far from splendid on that evening of their arrival; the confusion on the famous terrace and in the hall was baffling and terrifying, dark gentlemen robed romantically but behaving like Billingsgate porters snarled and growled, streams of luggage poured in waves into the hall, cascaded tumultuously onto stairs, down passages and into the lift, and women, tired and dusty and disheveled, screaming with the lust of possession, snatched at bags, climbed up pyramids of trunks and burst in one or two instances into despairing tears.

Now it was on just such an occasion as this that Clara was at her best. She was irritated of course and disappointed also, but her splendid capacity for extracting the best out of any situation, her gallant sense of humor, came admirably to her rescue. After all, how funny everyone looked, how absurd that lady with her hat over one eye perched on a pile of luggage and regarding with defiance a tall porter who was doing his best to lure her away! How funny everybody, but how unromantic; what a way to spend one's first evening in Egypt!

It was then that she saw Montague Fraser. She noticed him in the first place because, standing near the door, he was surveying the tumultuous scene with exactly her own sense of aloof amusement. "What a nice man!" she thought and, as always when she saw a nice man, her heart beat faster, the excitement of the hunter when he hears the horn that tells him that the fox has been found.

As a matter of honest recorded truth, Montague was a masculine Clara; a man between thirty and forty with some private means, a gay, adventurous spirit and excellent physical health, he found his delight in constant relationships whose real fascination lay in their inconstancy. In these days of a superfluity of women, to have reached thirty-six or thirty-seven, to be nice-looking, well-off, amusing and yet single proves you no ordinary man. Montague, although he had shown courage in the war and common sense in his affairs, lived deliberately on the surface of things.

What gave life its savor to him was that sudden meeting with a pretty woman, that mutual realization of coming romance, that gentle sliding from nonsense to nonsense, from implication to implication, that moment when every look and every word means more, much more, than any look or word has meant before, that hovering on the verge of some desperate declaration and then that gentle slipping off again back into safety and

*One mood told Clara that marriage might make something of her; another, that she had better remain free.*

security. Montague was a real artist in romantic relationships, meaning no harm to anyone, only wishing to give everybody the best of times but fearing even as Clara feared that sudden word, that fatal plunge, that would cut off his liberty forever.

He was very dark for an Englishman, tanned with the sun, with large, sparkling eyes; a short, clipped black mustache gave him, ladies often told him, a military appearance; he was healthy and vigorous in every movement and looked considerably younger than his years. His main charm for women lay in his audacious health and vigor, his vital good humor. He was never cross, never ill, never, you would think, unhappy, but he had sacrificed many things to secure his gaiety and freedom and in his heart he knew it; you cannot, I repeat, both have your cake and eat it.

He saw Clara as soon as she saw him. She was looking especially pretty in the heart of that disheveled crowd, having





*At Luxor the strangest day in the lives of Clara and Montague began. She felt that*

learned, as all clever women learn, that there is no time when it is so necessary to be fresh and unperturbed as when the others of your sex are fighting in the *mêlée*. It does not matter what occasion it was that brought them together; with two bold and practised spirits like these the occasion is instantly found.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "I was looking for——"

"It doesn't matter at all," she said. "Am I in your way?"

"Of course not," he replied, laughing, "any more than everybody is in everybody's way."

Five minutes later they had discovered that they were both passengers on the Rameses from Cairo to Assuan.

THAT night in the privacy of her own room Clara was a little distressed; she scented danger. This man was more attractive than anyone whom she had met for a very long time, he was unmarried, it was obvious that he liked her extremely; and undressing in his room Montague also was perturbed; this girl had a charm, a vivacity that was quite unusual; three weeks on the boat with nothing very much to do, with a romantic background and moonlit evenings—yes, he must be very careful. It was not so dangerous for him as it would have been ten years ago, but the specter of matrimony drew close to his pillow that night; she, a tall, enveloping figure clanking chains, hung above him; as he fell asleep he heard her ironical laugh.

It was perhaps this fear that kept him away from Clara during his two days in Cairo. He visited the mosques, the university and the two museums with an air of determined celibacy; nevertheless, in the Egyptian Museum his fear gained upon him. He was no fool. If he had sold his soul for gaiety he had had at least his soul to sell and the Tut-ankh-amen treasures, the cherry-colored chariot of the princess, the gold room with its glitter and sparkle and pathos, the shining coffins, the little wooden figures of boatmen and soldiers and peasants, the tragic mummy of Rameses II with the uplifted hand, these things stirred in him

a sense of duty and romance that he could not altogether defy. It might after all be well for him when he was safe on that river; this living, breathing past made him wonder whether he had done well with his life, whether he had not wasted instincts and impulses that were more valuable than all the amusements that he had cultivated. Yes, a dangerous place, that museum. It made a fellow seem more trivial and less wise than was good for a fellow's health.

Once on the boat, his normality returned; here was the world that he understood and rejoiced in. The tourists were gay, merry and impertinent. Of course Clara and Montague were at once together and formed with Horace Tripp, Edward Mellon, Alice Murray and Mrs. Bellamy a very gallant little company. Clara was the center of the boat's fun; in no time at all she developed exactly the right relationships with everybody; she was serious with the Anglican clergyman, attentive and decorous to the old ladies, gay and cosmopolitan with the Americans.

During the expedition to the Sakkara tombs Horace Tripp proposed to her. They had just visited the little room of Ptah-hetep; they had gazed with wonder upon the lovely paneled door with its delicate green and blue, the triumphant relief of bulls and the frieze of floating birds. They came out of the tomb and sat on the sand above it waiting for the rest of the party, and Horace Tripp made his declaration. He gave her to understand that he was as devoted as he was poor and that living with such devotion made money of no account.

This was easy work for Clara; she was charming and maternal, she showed him that she was touched by his generosity but she was afraid that she did not care for him just like that but that she could promise faithfully always to be a sister to him. He gave her to understand that he would shortly propose to her again and rode off on his camel with an air of desperate determination that was fine to see. She felt perfectly secure; that night on the boat she was the gayest of the gay; she knew that she could deal



*something extraordinary and wonderful was going to happen to her. All her plots and plans were thrown away.*

with Montague Fraser just as easily if the dangerous moment came.

On the following day, however, when there was no sightseeing and the boat slipped through the blue water like a dream, when the strange creaking groan of the *sakieh*, that primitive water-wheel as old as time itself, came lingering across the green fields, she was forced into a more active consciousness of Montague's personality. He was developing a very pleasant little romance with a tall, dark, serious girl who read poetry on every possible occasion and looked at the rest of the ship's company as though they were infinitely trivial. Clara did not like the girl and, betrayed out of her usual caution, she told Montague so. The glance that he gave her, ironical, challenging and personal as though she alone was worthy of it, perturbed her.

She answered him sharply. "It doesn't mean," she said, "because you carry Keats under your arm everywhere that you care for poetry; it only means that you want other people to know that you care. The girl's a fool."

He didn't answer her; afterwards she was intensely vexed with herself and on the following day she ostentatiously avoided him.

ON THE way back from Abydos they quarreled. It had been a disturbing afternoon for Clara; she hadn't supposed that anything could appear so fresh and so beautiful after thousands of years. Nothing at any rate had a right to because it made you in a way ashamed of yourself, you aging so quickly, watching so anxiously this white hair and that heavy wrinkle—and here were these drawings blazing with their blues and reds on the white, sunlit walls positively as though they had been made yesterday. She was put out, her thoughts would not move in their customary gay procession, she knew once again, coming from heaven knows where, that so-tiresome implication that perhaps after all she had been wasting her life, doing nothing with it, filling it with emptiness; and so she was cross with Montague—very cross.

As they jogged on their donkeys through that wonderful expanse of fresh green on whose surface the whole life of the Egypt of two thousand years ago was quietly pursuing its way, donkeys and goats, camels and oxen moving about the fields with that assured right to be there that only the most ancient possession can give, she felt so trivial, so unimportant and so silly that she snapped at Montague: "The matter with you, Mr. Fraser, is that you're so selfish."

"Of course we're all selfish," he laughed back at her (he looked so stolid and thick-set on his donkey that she could have shaken him). "We're all exactly the same, only some of us think it worth while to hide it. You're selfish, I'm selfish, every one of us in this party is selfish, and why shouldn't we be? We can live only once and nobody's going to look after us if we don't look after ourselves."

"You've got a terribly low view of human beings, Mr. Fraser," she answered, "and I don't like it. I think it's conceited."

"Of course I'm conceited," he answered her. "You give much less trouble to other people if you're conceited; it's the ones who are always doubtful of themselves and always wanting to be reassured that they're all right who give all the trouble. Now I don't bother anybody and nobody bothers me." But even as he said it so boldly he felt a twinge of discomfort. Wasn't it after all rather lonely, this attitude of his?

As he twisted back on the donkey, saw the hills behind Abydos like piles of unsubstantial flaming cloud and from it a curtain of the faintest rose slip across the fields and the animals, the *sakiehs*, the little pot-bellied children, he was definitely unhappy—wanting something that he had not got.

Luxor was reached, the boat was moored at the landing-stage and the strangest day of their lives arrived. It was not in its beginning very strange; they had to rise terribly early in the morning and then they were rowed, a noisy, laughing party, across the still gray waters; then on (Continued on page 118)

# A Home-Body

By Ernest Poole

The Story of a Girl Who

Would Not Go to New York—and WHY

NOT far from Monte Carlo, our motor-car stopped by a great gray rock which towered a thousand feet or more out of the blue and silver sea. An ancient, interesting rock, a vast, forlorn sky-scraper, with many tragic histories clinging to its ruined sides. For a fortified town had once been there. Even now some life was left. As we climbed up we found small dwellings tucked into old fortress walls, a scattered village straggling up through tunnels and steep, crooked streets.

Before a tiny wine-shop four young men were sitting at cards. Others were singing inside the shop; while in a small room behind, some boys and girls were dancing to the lively thump and tinkle of guitar and mandolin. A thin little priest came up the street, bearing in a shallow case a miracle-working image. And in a dark old church below, fervently praying as though for aid, before three candles knelt a girl, with a gleam in her bright eyes of such excitement as left no doubt that the old, old human drama still persisted in this spot. What was she so excited about?

Then I forgot her for a while—for, climbing to the ruined keep, I let the ghostly memories rise out of the dark, tumultuous past, and these ancient memories still filled my mind as I descended through the village of today. But then I was recalled to the present by a ripple of laughter and the teasing voice of a girl:

"Oh, New York, New York, New York!"

Startled, I stopped and looked around. Standing by an old stone wall was the girl whom I had seen in the church—but all excited fervor had been banished from her eyes. They danced with a derisive scorn, and the same careless gaiety showed in her red lips, her little snub nose and the tilt of her dark curly head.

"What do I care for New York?" she asked, in dialect of old Provence. And the lean, handsome youth at her side retorted savagely:

"What do you care any longer for me?"

"For you?" She bent straight towards him smiling, murmuring words which made him suddenly catch her into his arms. But then he flung her back, and I noticed now that this vexed young man wore a brand-new suit of American clothes! Seeing me there, he gave a slight start.

"Hello," he said. "American?"

"Yes," I answered.

"So am I. New Yorker?"

"Yes."

"Me, too," he said. And his claim was as good as mine. For if he was born near Monte Carlo, I was raised in the Middle West. Typical New Yorkers both.

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

His face abruptly darkened. "I am having one terrible time!"

"What's the trouble?"

He hesitated—but he was too desperate to keep his trouble to himself. "I want this girl shall marry me right away quick and go to New York. I been there already myself five years, and I work so hard I gotta fine job—chief shipping-clerk in export house. My pay is forty bones a week. So I come back to get this girl. But would you believe it? She say, no! She won't leave this dump to go to New York!"

With the startled interest of a typical New Yorker, I looked at this maid who had jilted my town; and in my laborious French I asked her why she did not go.

"Oh, *là là!* Why should I go, when I have everything here, monsieur?"

"Everything!" snorted the angry youth. "What do you know about New York?"

"Have you showed her pictures of it?" I asked.

For answer he jerked from his pocket a picture post-card of lower Manhattan—a vivid, gorgeous piece of work.

"Regard these sky-scrappers!" he cried, speaking in their native tongue.

She did so, then quietly folded her hands and asked, with a Mona Lisa smile: "But have you in all New York a sky-scraper as high as this?"

"You call this dump a sky-scraper—this lousy old mountain?" he exclaimed.

"*Le bon Dieu* made it," she replied.

"Maybe—but He left it cold—no modern improvements," sniffed the New Yorker.

She bristled. "Have we not electric lights and telephone?"

"Yes, but no *chauffage central*!" Which in plain English means steam-heat. Turning to me, he said, with a groan, "You ought to feel this place at night!"

"Oh, *là là—chauffage central*!" exclaimed the girl derisively. "Have we cold winters as in New York? Does not the warm sun of heaven give us summer all the year? And have we not good wine at night?" She turned to me with a quick smile. "Regard, monsieur, this feeble one. Five years ago he was warm in this place, though half the time he wore but a shirt—while now he shivers in thick clothes. New York has steam-heated him nearly to death. He is hardly, one might say, a man."

"I ain't, ain't I?" In his ire the outraged New Yorker relapsed into the speech of Manhattan, but then he addressed her again in French. "Is there any man you know who is earning forty dollars a week—over a thousand francs?" he demanded.

The maiden answered in a dreamy tone: "I made a thousand francs one day—at Monte Carlo."

"Yes, and I'll bet you lost it all the next time you played!"

"Oh, no, I spent it," she happily sighed. "I spent it in those lovely shops."

"That's it, and you want me to do the same—save nothing for a rainy day!"

"But here we have no rainy days," sweetly she reminded him.

"And, ah, we shall be so happy here!"

"I WON'T! I won't stay in this dump!" he cried. But I caught a glimmer of fear in his eyes, for she was putting a spell on him. Such an enticing little maid!

"And we shall have such holidays—so many," she went softly on. "In your New York, you tell me, you have but five or six a year. We have that many every month. And even when we work, we are not so stupid as to work so hard all day that we can only shiver at night. We shall be very gay at night."

"What have we got to be gay with?" demanded her lover with contempt. "Can we go to the movies every night?"

"I would rather love you every night—except on Sundays," she replied. "And then we shall go to Monte Carlo, to the opera, *mon ami*. Have you such opera in New York?"

"We have—the finest in the world!"

"Yes, for a thousand francs, perhaps, but here we can go for ten," she said.

"Then where'll we dance?"

"Cannot we dance?" she retorted, with a toss of her head.

Scornfully he pointed to the little dance-hall in the wine-shop just below. "You call that place a jazz palace?" he asked.

"If I dance with the one I love," she asked, "do I need a thousand others there? And is it not pleasant while dancing to be able to drink good wine? Have you wine in New York?"

"We have," he replied. "And I know a bootlegger who—"

"Yes, yes, you have told me," she cut in. "But I am an honest girl and I do not like to break the law. All my life I have gone to the priest. Have you a priest such as ours—a wise good man who drinks wine himself and knows it is no sin?" she asked. "A





**I**n this place two troubadours had once held their Courts of Love . . . "What do I care for New York?" the girl was asking. "What do you care any longer for me?" said the young man.

man who knows one sin from another and who guards one's soul from harm? Oh, I am quite contented here—and so shall you be, too," she said, firmly and decisively. "With all the wine we wish to drink, and good French bread and olive-oil, green things from the mountains, fish from the sea, sun all the year, warm beautiful nights—"

But once again the poor youth broke away from the spell that she was weaving. "I tell you, I won't stay!" he cried. "You choose between this dump and me!"

But she did not seem to hear. Turning to me, she repeated: "I am an honest girl, monsieur, I do not like to break the law. And how should I live in a city where one cannot even play roulette without becoming a criminal? No," she said, with a virtuous air. "To play a little when I please, to drink a little wine when I like, to do my work in the warm sunny days in the fresh pure air which descends from the skies, to be hungry and eat simple things, to sleep, to be strong, to be prepared to bear strong children, and to take each one to the priest—to live by God's laws with the man that I love—is not this enough?" she asked. "Oh, yes, we shall be happy here. And soon he will be a fine chauffeur, earning all the money we need—while I," she added serenely, "will earn a little money, too."

"How will you earn it?" demanded the youth.

She shot a little glance at him out of the corner of her eye. "Some artists come up here," she explained, "and wish to paint me. All I do is to sit still. Five francs an hour, *mon ami*."

"And they make love to you!" he cried.

Quickly she looked up at him.

"What do I care for them?" she asked. "For all the artists in the world? It is you alone I want."

He leaned forward and gripped both her hands. "You are coming with me to New York!" he declared, and his voice was quivering now. "My job won't wait! I must go in two days! Our tickets are bought for that Genoa boat! Tomorrow we shall go to the priest—and then we shall depart!" he cried.

With a smile unconsciously tense, she said softly, "Yes, my beloved—tomorrow perhaps we shall go to the priest—but after that we shall remain."

With an exasperated "Ah-h!" he seized her and shook her, then turned to me.

"What do you think of her?" he asked.

I did not tell him what I thought, for in such matters I have learned it is wiser not to intervene. But while I hesitated, the maiden, too, appealed to me:

"Shall I leave all this for New York, monsieur?"

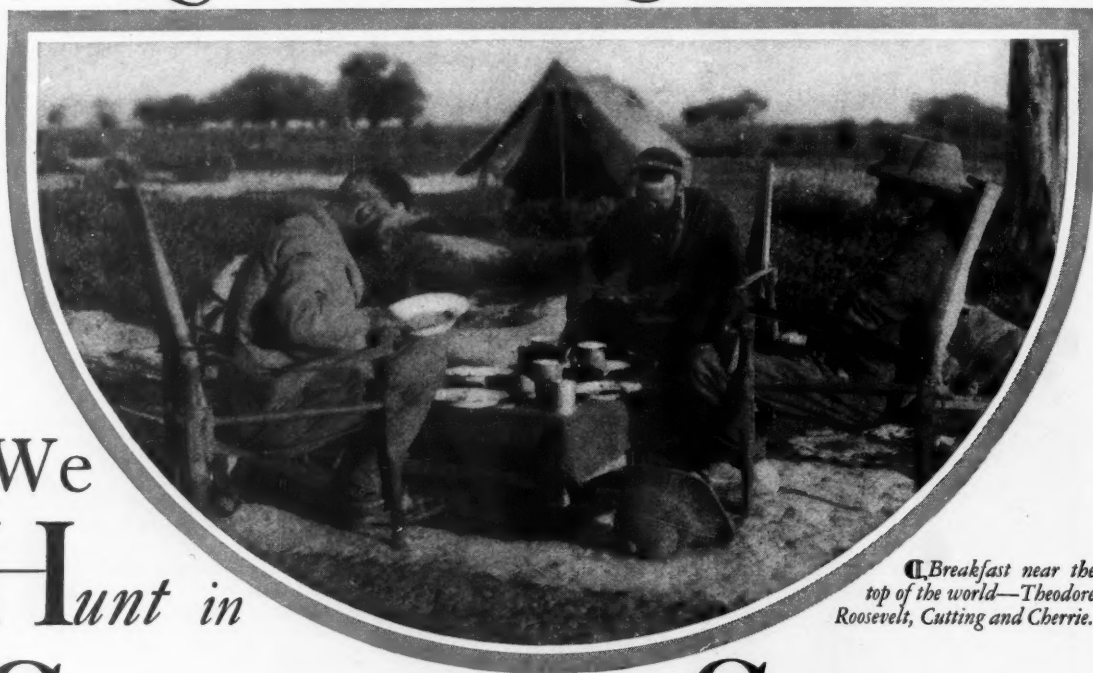
"Mademoiselle," I replied, in my cowardly way, "I am only a writer of stories. I cannot advise you here. But I wish to learn how this story will end." I pulled out a stamped post-card and on it scribbled my next address. "Will you write to me tomorrow?" I asked.

"Oui, monsieur."

I left them then, and went that night to Monte Carlo.

What she said to him that night I do not know. But two days later, far away, I received at my hotel the post-card I had given her. And on it was written simply this, in a firm triumphant hand: "*Il restel*!" Which in English means, "He remains!"

By KERMIT ROOSEVELT



Breakfast near the top of the world—Theodore Roosevelt, Cutting and Cherrie.

# We Hunt in Summer Snows

OUR knowledge of the geography of the Tian Shan range was very hazy. We had been unable to get any good maps, and what we could gather from the Kazaks and Kalmucks through the medium of our *shikarries* only further confused us. Kargai Tash had always been our goal for hunting *Ovis Karelini*, but whether it was a *nullah* or a mountain we could never make sure. The small-scale maps which we possessed showed it as a somewhat indefinite range of mountains; but from our questionings we gathered that that was not what the Kazaks meant when referring to Kargai Tash. After leaving our camp in the Kok-Su we headed gradually into the hills, through pine forests where we were told the *wapiti* lived, and over one or two small passes.

Ever since crossing the Muz-art we had been doing our best to get in touch with one or another of the natives, Kazak or Kalmuck, with whom Rahima had hunted on his previous expeditions in the Tian Shan. He had been here twelve years ago, and as far as we could learn there had been no *sahibs* in the country since then; first there was the war, and afterwards the approach through Russia was closed. Of his two Kalmuck friends Namgoon had died and Nurla was away, but eventually there turned up Tula Bai, a Kazak, of whom Rahima

thought very highly. He was a short man and walked doubled over, which gave him a gorilla-like appearance. The first few days he was our guide, his mind, to put it kindly, seemed elsewhere, for we doubled about every which way, much to the disgust of our head pony man, who did not hesitate to explain to Tula Bai with some warmth the error of his ways. Ted and I reserved judgment, which was about all that we could do; but when once we got straightened out and really in the hunting country we found that Rahima had not overrated the old fellow.

We stopped at a number of Kazak *khourgas* to bargain for horses, for we wished to spell our riding ponies when we started in hunting. We also had sheep to buy for food for ourselves and the men. In one *khourga* we found a large hooded eagle. Its owner told us that he used it for coursing roe deer and also for *wapiti*; but in the latter case he can only have meant partly grown *wapiti*.

As we climbed, the weather became colder; the rain which had been an almost daily occurrence changed to snow and sleet on the passes, and one could imagine how bitter cold it must be in the winter months if this was what we found in mid-summer. Unexpectedly one afternoon the riddle of Kargai Tash was solved for us when Tula Bai pointed out a long,



The reward of a hard afternoon's trailing—Kermit's brown bear.

flat-topped butte crowned with tall, irregular pencils of rock. This was Kargai Tash, the stone trees, as the words signify in Turki. Near its base at an altitude of slightly more than 9,000 feet we pitched our camp. The cold rain and the mist-clad mountains made it evident that hunting could not be continuous.

Rahima was greatly discouraged when we found that several bands of Kalmucks had preceded us by ten or twelve days and were engaged in shooting marmots. They had old single-shot rifles of the model of 1876 and though they confined their attentions to the marmots, he was afraid that they would have disturbed the country and driven the sheep elsewhere. Kazak and Kalmuck are in continual feud and it behooves the *sahib* to watch out that whichever is with him does not make use of the shadow of his wing to oppress the enemy. Our Kazaks did their utmost to persuade us to allow them to confiscate the rifles and ponies of the Kalmucks on the plea that they had disturbed our hunting country.

On August 15 Ted and I set out in opposite directions from camp. Khalil and Tula Bai were with me, while Ted had Rahima and a *shenzi* named Noorpay, the possessor of a remarkable pair of eyes. We rode cautiously along, dismounting below the crest of each hill and crawling to the top, field-glasses in hand to spy out the country. The first wild animal to be sighted was a marmot sitting at the mouth of its burrow. These dark-skinned little fellows are much sought after by the Kalmucks, and we were told that at Kulja a good hide would bring three dollars.

The next game we caught sight of from a subsequent rise was a roe-deer. Not long after this Khalil made out a small ram climbing up a steep hill. When it had topped the crest we hurried after it.

At the brow of the hill Khalil and I had our field-glasses ready, and soon picked up three Karelini rams, feeding on a patch of grass a mile or more away. Our first stalk was a failure. Verily in this country "the wind bloweth where it listeth" and a sudden eddy made our quarry suspicious. They could have got only a very faint whiff, for they trotted off slowly while we

watched them from behind a rocky ridge. We saw that in addition to the three marked down there had been as many more hidden. One was Khalil's small ram, and the others were clearly big fellows; Khalil and Tula Bai estimated them as all having horns more than fifty inches in length.

Trotting across a narrow valley, they climbed a long, easy, sloping ridge. As they crossed a stretch of snow their horns stood clearly outlined, and we realized that those of the last one were larger than the others; but it was when he clambered upon rock on the ridge crest and framed himself against the blue sky that we saw him in his full glory and appreciated his true size. Khalil turned to me—"If master get him I give God twenty rupees at Bandipur!"

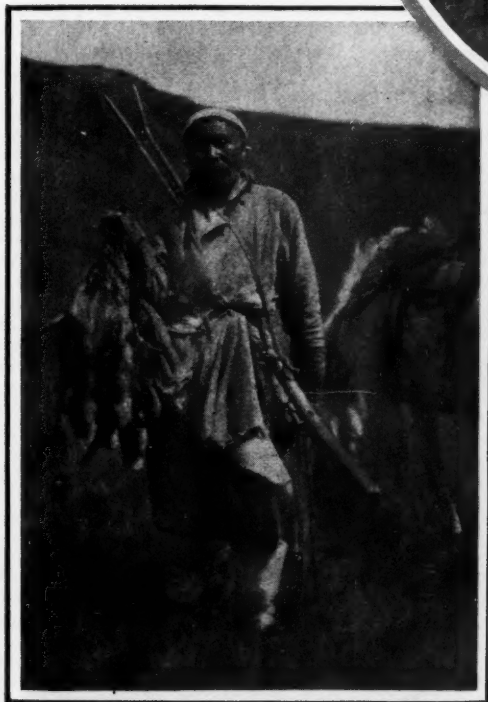
Tula Bai, although ready to go anywhere on horseback, was not of much use on foot; in addition, he was inclined to be crotchety and opinionated, so I sent him back to the ponies. When the sheep passed out of sight Khalil and I made all speed towards where we had last seen them. We found that they had stopped seven or eight hundred yards farther on; some were lying down, others were feeding. The only way to get within range involved a long detour, and included some stiff climbing.

An hour's work, the most disagreeable part of which was the crossing of two wide and steeply inclined snow-fields where we started a couple of small avalanches and felt in a very precarious and uncomfortable position, brought us to a ridge running down near where the sheep lay. Now was the time to make haste slowly, for a misstep and a loosened boulder might give us away. All went well and at a short 150 yards I fired.

We had picked out the old ram; he was lying down facing in the opposite direction, and I made precisely the same shot as I had with my ibex at Khan-Ayalik. A bullet entering from behind and ranging forward is almost inevitably fatal. Although he ran I knew he could not go far, so I turned my attention to his companions. I wanted four sheep. They ran off quivering and then swung around, uncertain (Continued on page 187)



**C**Above: Fezildin brings in the big ibex head.



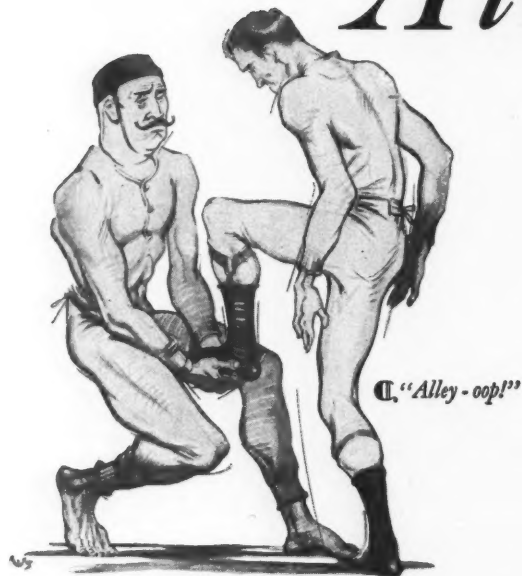
**C**Left: A Kalmuck who is proud of his marmot skins.



**C**Right: A record mountain-sheep shot by Kermi.



# Alley Oop!



Illustrations by the Author

IT WASN'T that young Rolando D'Arcy failed to light properly on the back of his neck. He did that. What is more, he did it with a measured grace that lesser men might envy, entering a drawing-room. Young Rolando, falling on his neck, had something of the grand manner about him. That wasn't the thing that caused his three brothers to exchange a weighty, triangular glance. There had been something more in Rolando's manner—an aloof, contemptuous something. It was with an unmistakable air of condescension that Rolando, having fallen on his own neck, completed the gesture by spinning on it.

His three brothers—Julius, Herman and Otto—expressed their aggrieved emotions to each other in pantomime that was almost verbose. Rolando snapped gracefully from his neck to his feet. If he noted the expressive silence of his brothers, he gave no sign. He took his coat and hat from the back of a chair.

"Which concludes the day's humpty-dumpty business," he remarked. "If you will pardon me, I'm going for a stroll in the park and a bit of ozone. *Au revoir!*"

The door closed behind him. The three brothers stood, fixed in a tableau of dumb despair. It was broken by Otto. He cast himself backward in a trio of indignant flip-flops. He spoke as the last of them landed him, red-faced and breathless, on his feet.

"Ow-revoyer!" Otto snorted. "A stroll in the park! A bit of ozone! His old man should hear such cracks."

"And do you catch the snooty way he talks about our act?" demanded Herman, going into a one-hand stand. "Like it ain't good enough for him."

They waited for Julius to speak. He was the oldest brother and fittingly the understander, or ground man, of their act, the Four Tumbling Tarks. He was the understander in other ways, as also became an oldest brother.

Julius braced his legs squarely and made a stirrup of his clasped hands.

"Alley!" cried Julius thoughtfully.

Otto put his foot in the stirrup. "Oop!" he shouted.

And forthwith he went spinning into the air in a backward somersault that grazed a chandelier. The Tarks were rehearsing in their room in Mrs. Fisher's theatrical boarding-house—strictly for the profession.

"It's the way a dame can do to a fellow every time," said Julius slowly.

"But that broad ain't no dame at all," protested Herman. "She's a big tramp, that's what she is. I don't care if they do bill her as that dainty English music-hall *arceest*. She's nothing but a—"

"Don't talk out of your turn," interrupted Julius severely. "It wouldn't make no difference to him now if she was one of these demi-mountains. The riddle is that poor Rollie has fell for her."

"You ought to back Rollie into a corner," advised Otto, "and stake him to a hefty earful."

"There's two times you can't talk to any man," replied Julius. "One is when he's going the booze route. The other is when some dame is making a bum out of him." He arched his broad back. "Alley!" he said.

"Oop!" responded Herman and Otto. They clambered on top of him in a disheartened pyramid.

"She's doing worse'n that to Rollie," spoke Otto, close to the ceiling. "Why, she's even got him so he wants to be a actor! Ain't you caught this new routine of his?"

"It's turrrible," added Herman, sandwiched between them. "He's took to reciting to hisself. I caught him in the bathroom doing that monolog about life being like a railroad station."

"I can top that," grunted Julius. "He tells me only yesterday that we ought to clean up our act."

"Clean it up?" gasped Herman.

"A genteel, refined, knockabout number like ours?" cried Otto.

"Rollie says," Julius went on, "we should cut out our 'alley-oop.' He says: 'It's vulgar, that alley-oop. Every small-time acrobat says alley-oop,' Rollie says."

"Well, I'll be gosh-hanged!" exclaimed Otto. "How could you do a tumbling act without 'alley-oop'? Well, I'll be—"

It was too much. With the weight of this outrage upon it, the despondent pyramid swayed, teetered—and collapsed. The three brothers, on the floor, sorted themselves out of a tangle of arms and legs.

From the floor below came a salute of catcalls and jeers. It wasn't a protest against the noise their fall had made. Such a thing would have been unethical in Mrs. Fisher's boarding-house.

In Mrs. Fisher's any day one might encounter simultaneous rehearsals by a decadent opera soprano, a cigar-box juggler, a buck-and-wing duo and a team of Australian wood-choppers.

The outcry that assailed the remaining Tarks was merely a comment on their apparent clumsiness. In a word, the raspberry. Even the bark of the trained seals, lodged in a basement tank, swelled the derisive chorus.

The low spirit of the Tarks was signified in that they made no reply. Ordinarily—well, Julius was known over three vaudeville circuits for his snappy give-outs and quick come-backs. He and the others were saturated with their sorrow.

"Too proud to alley-oop," mourned Otto.

"A born neck-spinner like Rollie," added Herman. "A real artist."

"Poor ma," said Julius, the understander.

The Four Tumbling Tarks were real brothers—not merely



Ara Besque—the solo dancer's morning stretch.

# By Wallace Smith



**C** "The Yankee Patrol" with variations.

professional relatives. Their father had been Colossus the Great, in his time a sensational cannon-ball juggler and weight-lifter. Their mother had been a butterfly member of the Dazzling Darios, slack-wire equilibrists extraordinary. The good *padre*, Mendel, might have been interested in such a union. His un-failing law might have measured the quartet of tumblers as a biologically inevitable result.

Three sons were born before Colossus the Great, one heroic *matinée*, undertook to lift one horse too many. He had named the first three sons himself. Solid, weight-lifting, guttural names—Julius, Herman, Otto. The butterfly of the equilibristic Darios had made fluttering protest against such titles for her babies. She survived Colossus the Great and the artistic ambition that sought to reach one Percheron beyond its grasp.

The fourth son was born the same season. The mother defied the memory of Colossus's frown and indulged the streak of romance that it had suppressed. She named the fourth son Rolando D'Arcy. Rolando D'Arcy Tark.

"There's one thing about that billing," said Julius, when he grew old enough to realize what his mother had done, "and that is—people will think it's only a stage name."

The brothers called him Rollie and, from his cub days, they gave him a gentle consideration that was not their habit among themselves. It had been their mother's last worry and last wish. Besides, he was the youngest brother.

So they brought him up as gently as they could rear one born, by weight and an inherited equilibristic agility, to be top-mounter for a tumbling act. At twenty-one, Rollie was the coddled pet of their refined knockabout turn.

And at twenty-one, perspiring and panting in the wings after his performance, he looked upon Mlle. Yvonne de Fleurette.

It was one of those fateful, fatal incidents. The Four Tumbling Tarks had been rushed out of town and into the Palace bill to take the place of a delayed roller-skating turn. They had been glad of the chance, for it was a spectacular bill.

The head-liner was Mlle. Yvonne, featured as a sensational importation from London and the music-halls, the toast of European nobility and the darling of the crowned heads. Mlle. Yvonne sang droll and somewhat naughty songs and danced, it was noted, with considerably less reserve than was the fashion of English variety hoofers.

The more veteran performers on the Palace bill were critical. Mlle. Yvonne's boasted English source may have provoked this attitude. In those days the story of the American act in the London music-hall was new. That was the story of the Brothers Zeno, singing, talking and dancing. They went to England to fold them up in their

## A New Story from Mrs. Fisher's Select Boarding House for Vaudevillians

seats, which is the vaudeville way of saying that a comedy turn has done very well indeed. The Brothers Zeno had billed themselves rather confidently. This was remarked by the master of ceremonies of their first London theater when, music-hall fashion, he announced the invading performers.

"Introducing the Brothers Zeno," he said to the audience. "Singing, talking and dancing. They are American and *they say* they are very, very clever. We shall see." A shrewd wink at the pit. "We shall see."

After that introduction, the Brothers Zeno did not fold them up in England. They were folded up themselves—and crated back to the old home circuit.

Maybe it was the memory of this inhospitable happening that flavored the comment of those who watched back-stage as Mlle. Yvonne performed at the Palace. It must have been something of the sort. Because it is not the way of the snug little world back of the curtain and the center-door-fancy to refuse welcome and encouragement to the greenest and most awful of acts. Even foreign acts.

"That dame's as old as the gag about I-think-I-sat-on-your-hat," remarked Kitty LaVelle, wife and target of vaudeville's premier knife- and ax-thrower. "And if she can *sing*, I can talk this samscrip language fluent."

"Give the trouper a break," admonished M. Jacques LaVelle, instinctively a husband and argumentative. He relented though, and added: "At that, if a American act put on them kind of songs the managers would call 'em blue and rule 'em out, regardless."

"Also that English dialect of hers is very ten-twenty-thirty," declared Jerry Tombola, the clown musician. "If she ever pulls that 'my-good-man' line on me again, I'll tag her on the smeller—lady or no lady."

"Always the perfect gent, Jerry," put in Sadie Tombola, who did straight for him on the stage. "But don't let her being a lady stop you. Because she ain't. No dame can string half-a-dozen Johns the way she's been doing and be on the level."

"She's so far up-stage," added Julius Tark, "that she rubs the paint off the back-drop."

"And all I can say," offered one of the models in the Parisian Poses Plastique, "is that if she made the crowned heads of Europe laugh, like they say she done, then these kings and dukes must laugh easy."

Such were the comments that Mlle. Yvonne de Fleurette, sprightly artist of the London music-halls, won on the big time. She was not destined, as may be gathered, to popularity among the gipsies of the brief spot-light.

But there was one, still panting and perspiring in the wings, who had joined the long line of smitten European monarchs. Rollie Tark became a worshiper. He fell harder for Mlle. Yvonne, as the saying puts it, than he had ever fallen in all his lifetime of tumbling. For all his experience, the stage-wise young eyes could not see under the grease-paint, the rouge and the mascara of 109



**C** Rehearsal on Blue Monday.

Mlle. Yvonne. To him it was as if she moved always in the fantastic radiance of the footlights. She had stirred inside of him the romance that Colossus the Great, hoister of horses, had crushed in the butterfly of the Dazzling Darios.

As bashfully as a boy carrying his first anonymous valentine to the mail-box, Rollie sneaked into a florist's shop and sent her violets. He feared that she would complain to the house manager and have the Tumbling Tarks canceled for this effrontery. He wouldn't have blamed her. Such a grand lady. But she didn't.

And within a week Rollie's devotion had become gossip in the dressing-rooms. Jerry Tombola had even seen him, on his way to the *matinée* performance, looking into a jeweler's window.

"That old she-walrus!" exclaimed Sadie, when he told her. "It didn't take her long to find out that the kid's got a bank roll."

"Aw, it's only puppy love," said Jerry.

"It ain't puppy love when it gets to the diamond stage," retorted Sadie. "That's the real grown-up, hound-dog variety."

"He's old enough to take care of hisself," Jerry answered.

"No man ever lives to be that old," replied Sadie.

Her partner glanced at her shrewdly. "Say, who's doing straight on this team, anyway?" he demanded. "About all I do these days is feed you cues for these ad lib. give-outs of yours."

When an incident starts bickering in such a notoriously congenial act as that of the Tombolas, it readily may be seen that the affair has assumed a bulky importance. Yet on the other side of the footlights it is traditional that they take other folks' troubles very seriously.

Julius Tark could not help knowing the way it was going with Rollie. He was worried. He quickly noticed the change in Rollie's tumbling. The youngest brother was becoming indifferent; almost languid, if such a thing is possible in the technique of a knockabout tumbler. Julius waited for a chance to speak to the boy. Waited and feared the moment. Because Julius knew how delicate the problem had become.

"He's in that noodly shape right now," said Julius to Herman and Otto, "where just one little word of good advice will get him up on his ear."

The chance to speak was brought to Julius by Rollie himself. And when it came the oldest brother was unable to utter the words he wished, lest they estrange him forever from the youngster. Because Rollie came perilously close to the trouper's ultimate disloyalty—disloyalty to the act in which he performed.

"I was just thinking," he suggested to Julius, "where we could maybe freshen up our turn by breaking up the alley-ooop stuff with a little monolog or something."

"What?" gasped Julius. "Step down in the footlights, cold, in the flesh-colored tights and spring 'The Shooting of Dan McGool'?"

"Oh, not that old stuff!" said Rollie. "I figure where I could change quick into a straight tuxedo make-up and give 'em a novelty. I got a kind of monolog sketched out."

"Oh, you have?" Julius's voice was icy but Rollie was too full of his plan to be so much as chilled.

"Ye-ah, and it's a red-fire wow," said Rollie. "Listen, it goes like this. Just imagine there's a orchestra playing a dramatic number, kind-of piano and villainish. Now get me, with a colored spot and the nobby tuxedo."

HE ASSUMED the impressive attitude favored by bass soloists. And, "with expression" and an unabashed gesturing, he recited:

"Life is like a restaurant. Some of us come and go like gay diners eating a full *table-d'hôte* meal with champagne. Then there are others who enter, thankful for a ham sandwich or even a crust of bread. For some of us there is rare vintages of wine and the orchestra plays classical music, whilst for others—"

Julius had listened so far, paralyzed. He choked with inarticulation. At last he raised his arms and cried his anguish.

"Oh, Lord—a ham!" he howled. "My own brother—a ham!"

Later he called Herman and Otto into council. Even then he could not reveal all of the shame to which Rollie's infatuation had brought him. But he announced his sudden decision.

"He's trying to be as classy and swell as he thinks she is," said Julius. "Talking's no good. We got to get him away from her. I've made up my mind. We close our act this week and go back home."

Otto and Herman were properly shocked.

"Close the act?"

"Break this swell big-time date ourselves?"

"I'd rather do six-a-day on the rutabaga circuit," replied Julius, "and keep my young brother a honest knockabout tumbler than play the head-line and have Rollie a ham actor."

During the Saturday night performance, Julius took a fall that wasn't in the routine of the Tumbling Tarks. He arose limping and his efforts to continue convinced the stage-manager, no less than the audience, that he was badly hurt.

Thus the Four Tumbling Tarks—or, rather, three-quarters of them—deliberately canceled their profitable engagement on the big time. Thus they made sacrifice for their youngest brother.

Rollie was blind to such heroism. He took Julius's misfortune as a personal slap from the hand of fate. Before they left for the train that was to carry them home to Mrs. Fisher's boarding-house he was guilty of fresh sacrilege. He suggested that the act continue without the oldest brother.

"We could fake it," he confided to Herman. "Instead of where Julius does that sideways triple turn and repeat, I could change quick into a full tuxedo. I got a nifty monolog we could break in. It's about life being like a restaurant—"

"Get away from me!" cried Herman. "That stuff might be catching!"

Back at Mrs. Fisher's, Rollie took to long hours of painful, ecstatic letter-writing. Every evening he sent Mlle. Yvonne a telegram. It was even whispered that he was sending her money.

With the lodgers at Mrs. Fisher's, no less than it had been with the performers at the Palace, Rollie's affair became gossip. And, because hearts are what they are in the warm, lovely world of make-believe, the folks at Mrs. Fisher's worried over the youngest brother and shared in silence the sorrow of the older ones.

THERE was one in Mrs. Fisher's lodgings who gave all his sympathy to the young tumbler whom love had brought, as it so often does, a desire for dramatic interpretation.

This sympathetic one was Joe Morton, one of the last of the old line of burlesque comedians. He dated back to the mellow days before musical comedy had skipped lightly away with some of the liveliest gifts of burlesque. And that was long before the old burlesque show, inexplicably, had undertaken to reform itself and succeeded in banishing much of its broad charm.

Among the old-timers he was known as Sport Morton and there were many tales of how this name had been won. At sixty the visible symbols of Morton's ancient sportiness were a slick barber's wave in his gray hair, a carnation in the lapel of his coat and the coat itself, which was a blond fabric fashioned in the style called "Newmarket." Cabmen were the last to wear them.

Sport Morton stepped jauntily toward old age in the company of his sporty memories. It was something more evil than ten thousand nights of slap-stick, guffawing comedy which had given his face the loose-lipped smile of a reminiscent satyr.

Sport Morton heard the gossip about Rollie and Mlle. Yvonne. He hurried to the boy as eagerly as a woman will hurry to the church wedding of an utter stranger. Rollie responded warmly to this first offer of sympathy. The ancient low comedian became the confidant of the rapturous youth. He listened ardently, and reviewed his own memories that the boy's words evoked.

"Is she a big woman?" asked the wicked little comic.

"Well, she ain't one of these skinny dames you see nowadays," responded Rollie.

"That's great!" said Sport Morton. "I always say a woman should have—you know, some shape."

"She's beautiful!" breathed Rollie. "And she's—good."

Morton smiled. Rollie expanded. He confided his swelling ambition; his desire to be something politer than a knockabout tumbler. For her, of course. He must be worthy of her. She was an *arteeest*.

Because of the feeling in Mrs. Fisher's, the boy and the gloat-ing old comic met in the less hostile atmosphere of the near-by park. It was so on the morning that the pyramid of triple Tarks had collapsed so noisily. Rollie brought news.

"She's coming to town," he told Morton. "She'll be at the Majestic in two weeks."

"No?" Sport's eyes blinked with incredulous excitement. "Does Julius know about it?"

"He thinks he'll have our act booked out of here by then," said Rollie. "But I won't go. I'll sprain an ankle myself to stay here—and see her!"

"Spoke like a man!" applauded Sport Morton.

"Uncle Joe, why ain't the others like you?" asked the boy. "They don't say anything to my face, but I know they're making rough cracks about me and Yvonne. Even my own brothers."

"Maybe it's because women always have been, like you might say, my failing," responded Sport.

That remark grated a little.

"I don't mean exactly that," Morton hurried on, "although, like you know, I've been friendly with a lot of 'em in my



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time. And I've got a lot of respect for 'em. Lots of folks don't figure where I should be anything but soured on 'em. But I ain't. Not even about Gussie. Now, there was a handful of a woman for you, Gussie!"

"Wasn't she your wife once?" asked Rollie. It was a perfunctory question. He had seen, with dismay, that Sport Morton's soft memories had been tapped. One of the penalties he had paid for this sympathetic audience was that he had to take his turn at listening. Sport Morton's anecdotes were always about women, big women; and not always delicate.

"She still is, for that matter," replied Morton, warming to a precious recollection, "though it's twenty years or so since I've saw Gussie. Now, you'd think the way she done me would've crabbed the whole female sect for me."

"Did she wrong you?" Rollie's question was in his current dramatic mood.

"You might say where that was a habit of Gussie's," explained Morton. "But that ain't why we split out. I'm broad-mindedder than most about such things."

"But she played you false!" exclaimed the ambitious monologist.

"It was when she started grabbing my laughs on the stage," Morton went on, "that my love grew cold, like you might say. No professional gent could stand a lady cutting into his comedy, could he?"

Rollie tried to adjust his professional attitude.

"It was love at first sight with Gussie and me," said Morton. "Just like you and this girl of yours. Gussie was a big woman. She was trouping with a burlesque."

"But Yvonne is a music-hall *arsteest*," protested Rollie, "not a spear-carrier."

"Just the same, the old burlesque shows were nothing to sneeze at," persisted Morton.

"You had to have a shape and plenty of it them days, even if you didn't do no more than carry a spear. And my Gussie had what it took. Even if she did come from Scranton, P-a. She had the makings of a real prima donna. I learned her a lot of stuff myself. How to get a laugh across proper. Doing a buck-and-wing routine and such things."

"And yet she quit you?"

"For a cornet player," said Morton calmly. "And not what you'd call a first-class cornet player, at that."

"And you ain't cynical or sarcastic about women?"

"Oh, that was all right," declared Morton. "You see, Gussie was copping my laughs. And then she'd got awfully fond of her Bourbon. Not that she wasn't always a lady, but she certainly was hard to reason with when she had her snoot full." He chuckled evilly. "And also, in a way, I'd got kind of interested in another woman. Let's see, what was her name? She was a fine big woman, too. That's funny, I can't remember. Emma? No, it wasn't Emma. Emma was before Gussie. You'd think I was getting old, not to remember. Life's strange, ain't it, kid?"

Rollie started as if responding to a familiar cue. "Life," he recited, "is like a railroad station. We come and go like railroad-trains on a time-table. Some of us—"

Morton, dismayed in his turn, interrupted hastily. Patient, even eager listener that he was, he had grown weary of that recitative philosophy. He had heard the monolog in all its changes. Rollie had worked over that bit. Life had been successively like a restaurant, like a gay ballroom, like a game of cards, like a cigaret, like many things.

"Have you spoke to Julius again about breaking in your monolog?" asked Morton.

"Aw, Julius is just sore," said Rollie, "because I'm trying to be something more than a alley-ooper. Gosh, how I hate that alley-oop. Alley-oop! Alley-oop! Lord!"

Just before Yvonne was to appear in town and at the Majestic, Rollie went again to the park-bench rendezvous. Sport Morton greeted him cheerily.

"That other woman's name was Nellie," he called. "Just thought of it."

He was halted by the pallor of Rollie's face. "Well, I'm going to do my monolog," said Rollie, with stiff lips.

"Has Julius gave in at last?" asked Morton. "I'm done with the Four Tumbling Tarks."

Rollie's voice was trembling.

"You mean you split out from Julius and Herman and Otto?"

"I'm done with that everlasting alley-oop. From now on I'm Rolando D'Arcy, like my mother called me."

"But that monolog?"

"I'll do it—if I have to get myself booked for a Croatian social club smoker."

"You mean you're going to play single?"

"Can you keep a secret, Uncle Joe? Listen, then—what would you say if I went on in a two-act with Mlle. Yvonne?"

"What does she say?" countered Morton.

"I ain't told her yet," admitted Rollie. "But she won't be like Julius. She'll let me—"

"You may be a panic with this Yvonne and all that," said Morton, "but, after all, she's got her career to think of."

Rollie wasn't pale now. He was blushing.

"That's another secret, Uncle Joe," he stammered. "Me and Yvonne are going to be booked double for life. We're engaged to be married. I sent her a engagement ring two days ago—and some money for a bride dress she wrote she would need. Ain't that great?"

"What did Julius say?" asked Morton.

"I ain't told him yet. You see, he don't understand like you do, Uncle Joe. And it was tough enough to have to spring it on him about splitting out from the old act."

"He raise Cain about that?"

"No," replied the boy soberly. "No. I thought for a minute he was going to cry."

And for another minute it looked very much as if tears were going to seep through the winking eyelids of young Rolando D'Arcy.

On the face of the wicked old comedian had come again the look of a reminiscent satyr.

"How much now," he asked, "did you say a bride's dress costs?"

When Rollie announced that he was going to bring Mlle. Yvonne for a social call at Mrs. Fisher's there was a fine turmoil in the mind of that kind lady. And there was a delightful panic of whispers all through her lodgings at this newest sign of Rollie's madness.

To Rollie, his betrothal still was a secret. Mlle. Yvonne had suggested that it remain so. For professional reasons, she had said. In Mrs. Fisher's it was a secret *only* to Rollie. The burden of confidence had been too great for Sport Morton to sustain.

"He can't insult me by flaunting the hussy in my face," declared Kitty LaVelle. "I've had to play the same bill with her but I don't have to meet her social. The day he drags her here, I'll be plenty absent."

"Don't be a fathead, darling," said M. Jacques. "You know you wouldn't miss it for anything; not even for a new black velvet drop with your initials worked in rhinestones. You'll be here big as a four-sheet poster."

Kitty halted her indignant denial in mid-flight. "Well, maybe I will," she admitted. "But it will only be to put that brazen water-buffalo in her place."

"They tell me she's old enough to be his mother," remarked Signor Constricto, the snake—which is to say, the contortionist.

"Say, that dame's old enough to be little Red Riding Hood's grandmother," replied Kitty. "And she's tough enough to play the wolf that scoffed the grandmother."

"That's the risk you run saving your pennies," reflected the Signor. "If Rollie didn't have quite a wad tucked in the old grouch bag, the chances are she wouldn't have gave him the work."

"Oh, Rollie's got quite a few looks to his credit," defended Mlle. Blanchette. She was a strong-jaw act and the wife of Signor Constricto.

"Let him take them looks down to some hock-shop," replied the Signor, "and see what he can get for 'em."

"She's stringing Rollie," said Kitty. "Since the Tarks walked out at the Palace she's been playing the cabarets and the back-rooms with a dozen different Johns. They do say she loves her schnapps, too."

"It's like that song about the wedding of December and May," said Abigail Savannah. She was one of the Savannah Sisters, singers of ballads old and new, and she took her ballads to heart.

"And what a stormy, rough-toss old December it is!" added Kitty.

It was Jenny Fairbank who finally decided the social attitude of Mrs. Fisher's lodgers. They had learned to listen when Jenny Fairbank spoke of such things. For Jenny was a woman of experience. In succession, she had been the bride of a trick bicycle act, an animal trainer and a magician.

Mrs. Fisher went to Jenny with her problem. "Poor Rollie don't understand," she said.

"He's just like a kid about it. I don't want to hurt his feelings. But I got to think of the feelings of my other folks. Even his own brothers."

"You've got to let him bring her here," ruled Mrs. Fairbank. "After all, Rollie's one of us—and a good trouper. Now's the time he needs a friend, whether he knows it or not. And it's time for all other troupers to lend a hand. And I'll tell 'em so, cold turkey."

The evening that Rollie was to bring Mlle. Yvonne to the boarding-house found all of the lodgers in the parlor. All except Julius and Herman and Otto.

"We can't do it, Mother Fisher," Julius had told her. "I promised ma I'd always look after him. And the only way I could keep my word would be to cut this dame's throat."

But all the rest of them were there, from Grosvenor Billingsworth, the Shakesperian heavy, to Hulda, the maid of all work. All of them stared at the tasseled plush portières leading from the entrance-hall. A strange little audience sitting before the curtain of a strange little drama. More thrilled, perhaps, than one might expect in such a theater-hardened band. Yet it is the way of those who deal in make-believe to be the stanchest believers.

"I never had worse stage fright," whispered Minnie Sawtelle, the lady sea-lion trainer. "Not even the night I first showed Olaf to a audience."

Dan Sawtelle, her husband and the king of all sword-swallowers, grunted ominously. He hated Olaf, her pet sea-lion, with a fierce, unreasoning jealousy.

"All I got to say is, don't let her come that 'my-good-man' line on me," muttered Jerry Tombola.

"We're doing this for Rollie," responded Sadie Tombola, "and if it comes to a pinch you'll kiss her hand—and like it."

Sport Morton alone seemed to be enjoying the situation. He had dressed for it. There was an extra meticulous swirl to the barberish slick of his gray hair. A pink carnation was in the lapel of his gaily checked suit. He even attempted some of the jests of his youth.

"Say, the party which first called a joke a gag," said Bert Coons, "must've heard some of them wows of yours."

Bert Coons was one of the team of Coons and Cooney, smart sidewalk chatter and extemporaneous rhymesters.

"That's professional jealousy," cackled Morton to Mr. Billingsworth. Then the others saw him whispering to the tragedian.

"A toast to the bride," they heard him say.

He hurried from the room. Mr. Billingsworth made a more profound exit. He bowed around the room and spoke sonorously.

"I must go to my room for a lozenge," he announced. "My throat is—ah—a trifle hoarse. An actor's first thought should be for his speaking voice. I return anon."

Mrs. Fisher sighed. Mr. Billingsworth's alcoholic habits were no secret in the profession. Then everyone straightened. From the hallway Hulda, doubling as door-maid, hissed a warning. They heard Rollie's boyish voice



## "I just knew you would come back to Fels-Naptha!"

**Mother:** "I've been tempted at different times into trying all sorts of soaps. I bought chips, powders and other new-fangled cleaners that claim to do about everything but the ironing and mending. But I always come back to Fels-Naptha. Nothing else gives so much help, and is so easy on the clothes."

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Fels-Naptha gives you *extra help* you cannot get from any other soap, no matter what its form, or color, or shape, or price. That's because it is more than soap—a great deal more than just "naptha soap." It is good soap and plenty of dirt-loosening naptha combined for perfect teamwork in one golden bar.

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No matter how you prefer to wash clothes—in a washing machine or tub—in boiling, lukewarm or cool water—you can get more help from Fels-Naptha than from any other soap. Millions of women are getting the benefit of this *extra* help. Why not you?

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on the outer stairs. Then a giggling response. "Here they come!"

Jenny Fairbank spoke in a tense stage whisper as they heard Hulda opening the door. "Act, all you troupers, act!" commanded Jenny. "Remember, we're doing it for Rollie. Fake a smile if you have to. But if you've got a streak of acting in you—*act!*"

The plush portières opened. Before them stood Rollie, embarrassed and blushing and looking very much a boy. And looking, too, very proud of Mlle. Yvonne.

"Yvonne," said Rollie, "meet the folks. Folks—this is Mlle. Yvonne."

Mlle. Yvonne stood blinking a moment in the gusty gaslight of Mrs. Fisher's crystal chandelier. Then she giggled again.

"She's got a little package on right now," said M. Jacques, sotto voce, to Signor Constricto.

"Potted to the ears," agreed the Signor, "and the poor kid ain't next."

But with the others they tried to fake a welcome. They were all "acting" their best. "Ah, my good people," said Mlle. Yvonne. "What a charming assemblage—I mean, assemblage—pardon me, I'm sure."

"There she goes with that 'my-good' stuff," hissed Jerry darkly.

"Gracious, she's even older than I thought," murmured Jenny Fairbank. "She's forty-five if she's a minute."

There was no illusion about Mlle. Yvonne for anyone—for anyone except the radiant, bashful boy at her side. Try as they would to "act," the scene in the parlor was dropping into a painful silence when Grosvenor Billingsworth returned. His voice had entirely recovered and his spirits with it.

"Ah, mademoiselle, forgive me," he intoned richly. "Permit me to repair the unpardonable breach of my delay and speak you welcome. Welcome, thrice welcome, mademoiselle, to our happy little—"

His voice halted blankly. Mlle. Yvonne was not looking at him. She was staring over his shoulder at Sport Morton and his barber's curl and his pink carnation.

"Well, I'll be damned!" said the dainty *arlest*.

Sport Morton's wrinkled old face had lighted. Across it ran the scroll of a smile, the loose-lipped smile of a doddering satyr. "Gussie!" he squealed. "If it ain't my Gussie!"

He toddled toward her, holding out his arms. She gathered the wicked little man to her

capacious breast. Then, suddenly, she laughed. A harsh, unpleasant laugh.

The boy watched from the other side of the room. Horror and unbelief stared from his eyes. He stiffened like a tortured sleeper in a nightmare. He wanted to cry out—to scream that this was all untrue. But, as in a nightmare, no sound came from his frozen lips.

Let older ones, who have forgotten, smile over the tragedy of first love. Let them, if they please, make light of the first disillusion.

Rollie stared. The fantastic mercy of the footlights had vanished in the gusty yellow of Mrs. Fisher's parlor chandelier. He was seeing her for the first time as the others had always seen her. Her eyes were sooty with disordered make-up. Rouge made coarse-grained streaks across her cheeks. There were lines of evil scarred about her lips and a stain of obscene red that smudged across her laughing mouth. Her body sagged.

It was not Yvonne any more. There was no Yvonne. It was Gussie. Sport Morton's woman. Just one of Sport Morton's women. A long while afterward, Rollie remembered of this scene only the leering face of the wrinkled comedian.

The last ember of the boy's devotion was stamped out. There was left only a scrawl of thin smoke and a white, bitter ash before a gaudy shrine.

Life was like a railroad station. Life was like a restaurant and a gay ballroom. But life was like this, too. A garish idol who laughed with a red mouth.

Gussie, still laughing, turned toward the tasseled plush portières.

"Where's the boy friend?" she giggled.

Rollie was gone. None of them had seen him stumble from the room.

Rollie had been missing from Mrs. Fisher's lodging for three days.

From up-stairs came a monotonous bumping and jarring. It was as if someone beat time to an especially slow and especially lugubrious Chinese funeral march. The tone of it communicated to the basement. There Olaf, the sea-lion, barked a dolorous response.

Up-stairs Julius, Herman and Otto Tark sought to fill the gap in their act. But heavy hearts make heavy feet and hands. Even for tumblers who, like other artists, should be able to keep their work apart from their emotions. There was ineffable woe in the turning of their routine flip-flops and a terrible melancholy top-mounted their liveliest pyramids.

"It's no use!" exclaimed Julius. "If he'd only come back—good Lord, I'd let him recite Gunga Din!"

But the act must go on somehow. The overture would play. The curtain would go up. The Tumbling Tarks must be ready. It is so in the dim delightful country across the footlights. And so the three Tarks went on with their desponding rehearsal.

Olaf's bark rose to the shriek of a tormented specter. And hushed abruptly.

The door of the Tarks' room opened, slowly and fearfully.

It was Rollie. Their youngest brother, haggard and miserable. His eyes, dark with suffering, went to Herman and Otto and, at last, to Julius. For all the world like the eyes of a whimpering, hurt puppy.

Herman and Otto watched the husky under-stander for some signal that would regulate their behavior. A well-disciplined act, the Tumbling Tarks. There was the prime matter of their professional pride. Rollie had been guilty of treason. He had sneered at the noble art of knockabout tumbling. He had deserted them for the painted smile of a bogus *arlest*. They owed him nothing but contempt.

At first Julius gave no sign. His face wore such a grim look as Colossus the Great must have admired. Only in his eyes was there a quick light of relief and gratitude.

Standing before him, begging forgiveness with every contrite line of his body, was the immemorial figure of the returned prodigal; the wobegone and wistful wanderer come back.

The act owed him nothing. But the Tarks were real brothers; not merely professional relatives. This wasn't Rolando D'Arcy standing so abjectly in the doorway. It wasn't even the brave top-mounter of their act. It was just Rollie, their kid brother, with wordless suffering in his face.

Julius still frowned. He faced Rollie. Then he braced his legs squarely. His broad back arched and he made a stirrup of his hands.

"Alley!" cried Julius hoarsely.

Two big tears dropped from Rollie's dark, miserable eyes. He understood the measure of this great-hearted forgiveness that his big brother offered. He knew that this was his full welcome.

Timidly he stepped forward and put his foot in the stirrup of Julius's hands.

"Oop!" shouted Rollie.

The back of the under-stander heaved and Rollie spun joyfully into the air.

"Alley-oop!"

## Just Married by Sewell Ford (Continued from page 79)

wasn't so stuck on him. He kept at her, though, until she gave in. Then, when the season ended, they started knockin' around different places, wherever they could get jobs together, him in the kitchen and her in the dinin'-room. Finally they drifted out here to Wisconsin and was gettin' along after a fashion until last fall when he picked up the flu and passed out sudden. Meanwhile she'd lost her place as waitress and got work in a laundry, but a couple of weeks ago she'd been laid off and now she found herself stony broke with nothin' in sight except the dirty future.

"Ah, let her rain!" says I. "You'll find something pretty quick—a bright girl like you."

"I might," says she, "if it wasn't for little Otto."

"Eh?" says I. "Otto?"

"Yes," says she. "Oh, where is he? Why, he was playing around here just a minute ago and I was watching him until you— Well, thank goodness, there he is. Otto! Otto! Come to mummy."

"I comin', mummy. I been playin' wiv fisses," pipes a little voice from over by a goldfish pool.

And what toddles over to the bench is a chubby-faced, pink-and-white youngster with a tow head and big round blue eyes. His little cotton suit is shabby and faded, but he's as

clean as if he'd just come out of the bathtub.

"Yours?" says I.

She nods and cuddles him up.

"That does make it complicated, don't it?"

says I. "How old is he?"

"Two and a half," says she. "He—he's a darling too, Spike; just as cute."

"Looks it," says I. "Takes after you some, don't he? The eyes, specially. Where you been parkin' him while you worked?"

"Oh, around different places," says she. "That was the tough part. Some of 'em wasn't good to him. Kept me worried. If I could only get him home to mother's."

"Where?" I asks.

"Biddeford," says she. "That's a long ways from here. I wrote to dad for money, but I guess he ain't gonna send me any. He was sore about my marryin' Otto. Ma would send me some if he'd let her, and I could get work and pay it back. But dad's awful set when he gets a grouch on, so what's the use?"

She starts sobbin' again, and the kid he looks up at her with them big round eyes and says: "Do fisses cwy and get 'eir faces all wet, mummy? Do 'ey?"

Which near has us both laughin'.

"Some great little converser, ain't he?" says I. "Hey, kid. Come feed your Uncle Spike some of that lingo. Come along."

He looks me over for a second and then climbs up on my knee as friendly as you please.

"You nice mans?" he asks.

"Me?" says I. "Say, I'll let you tell it.

What's your guess?"

For a minute he inspects me critical and sober, and then he favors me with about the winnin'est smile I've ever had sent my way. Say, ain't they great when they pull stuff like that? Gets you, don't it? I smiles back and gives him a hug.

"You—you got funny hat," says he.

"Is that so?" says I. "Well, let's see how you'd look as a shuffer, old top." And with that I drops my cap on his tow head so it hides everything but the tip of his nose. Say, first thing we knew we was all three chucklin' merry.

"I wish ma could see him now," says Nellie. "Ma's gonna see him soon," says I, reachin' for my roll. "How much to this Biddeford joint?"

"Oh, Spike!" says she. "That wouldn't be right. I—I couldn't take it from you."

"Huh!" says I. "Let's see, that's up on the road to Portland, ain't it? Yeah, I remember. Beyond Kennebunk. Right along the route I'm takin' this pair of honeymooners that— Why, say!"

"Well!" says she. "You ain't thought of anything, have you?"

## At the MAYFLOWER in WASHINGTON-D.C

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Foreign diplomats, with discreetly worn decorations; statesmen and financiers, military attachés—rarely, amid the black coats, the splash of color from some Continental uniform. . .

And everywhere the beautiful women: women in dazzling full dress, such as one sees in the public gatherings of no other American city; white shoulders, jewels . . . a brilliant kaleidoscope of faces.

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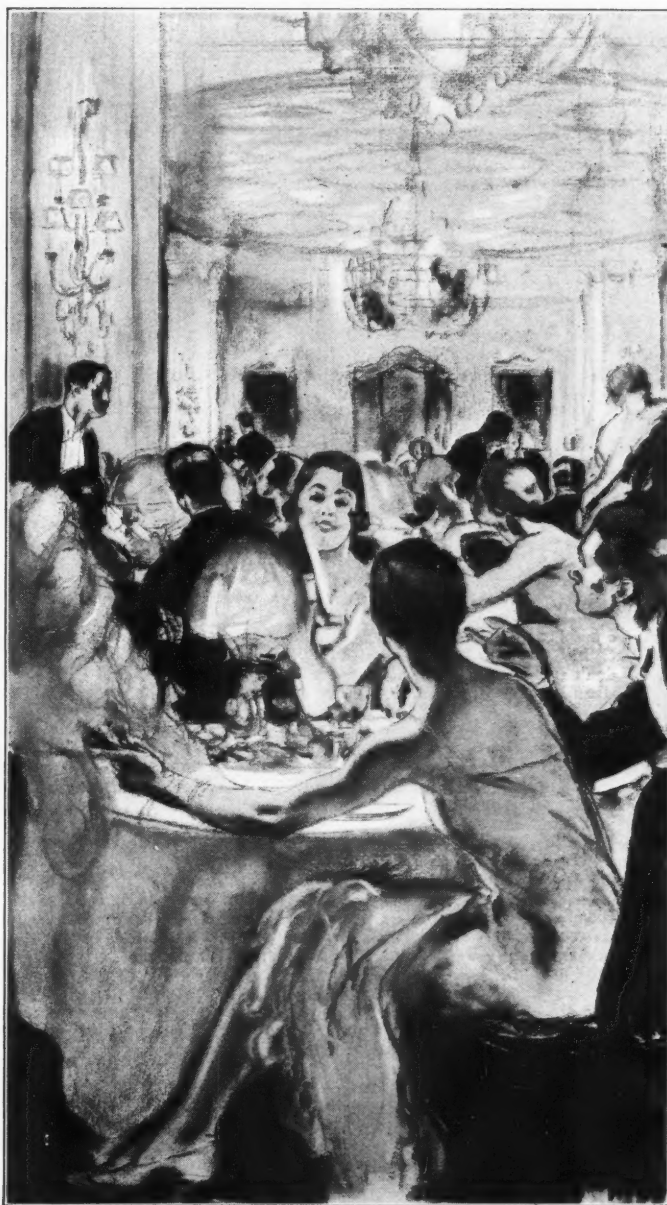
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"White shoulders, jewels—a brilliant kaleidoscope of faces"

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"Ain't I, though!" says I. "Listen, Nellie; how much baggage you got?"

"Nothing but a suitcase," says she.

"And you're dead set on gettin' back to Biddeford with little Otto?" I goes on.

She just shuts her eyes and nods.

"To make it," says I, "would you play any game I might put up to you? Anything on the level, I mean."

"Just try me, Spike," says she.

"I hope I can," says I. "I don't know yet. The scheme just struck me and it's got to be passed on by others. Anyway, you be right over there on the Beloit Avenue side at five o'clock, with your bag and the youngster. If we don't stop for you I'm gonna drop an envelop and you use what's in it to get back home with. If we do stop you climb aboard and ask no questions. Is it a go?"

"Anything listens good to me just now," says she.

"Then I'm off," says I. "Wait a sec., though. Here! They got sandwiches and ice-cream over at the drug store. Tell little Otto this is on Uncle Spike."

"You is nice mans, yes?" says the kid as I put him down.

"Don't ever let anybody tell you different," says I.

And on the way back to the house I'm so busy plottin' out the rest of the scenario that I forgets to think up an alibi for takin' over half an hour to a ten-minute errand. But I didn't need one. When I knocks on the door of Mildred's room I find that the new-made hubby has been called in and that she's throwin' a catfit for his benefit. She's still on the same line, puttin' up a wall because nobody can guarantee that strangers won't know they've just been married.

"But, Millie!" Wilbur is protestin'. "I really don't see how we can—"

And then he sees me givin' him the sign-off signal.

"Beg pardon?" says he.

"Outside for a minute," says I, jerkin' my thumb towards the hallway. He follows me through the door and I gives it to him.

"I've doped something out," says I.

"Really?" says he.

Then I sketches the plot for him. "Course, it's only gonna work one way," I admits, "for we're due to drop 'em in Biddeford; but by that time she'll probably ease out of her panic, and maybe be glad to get rid of 'em. Anyhow, it ought to be sure fire, with no chance of a flop. For look, Mr. Collins—we'll be a family party, won't we?"

"I say!" says he. "You're right."

"That's me—always," says I. "But you gotta make Miss Mildred see it first. Now you trickle in and sell her the proposition."

Blamed if he don't get fidgety at that.

"Why," says he, "I—I'm afraid I wouldn't know how. You see, I've never seen Millie just like this before. I'm a bit upset. Besides, I might get some of it wrong. Suppose you explain it to her, Spike. That's a good chap."

"Maybe I better," says I.

And I will say that, outside of a life insurance agent or a Florida real estator, few could have put it over stronger. "See how simple?" I winds up. "You're a young couple travelin' with the little one and nursemaid, and with them two along you can get away with anything."

"What!" says Mildred. "Take a perfectly strange child with us? How dreadful!"

"It won't seem so after you've seen him," says I. "He's as clean and cute as they make 'em. Won't me, right off the bat?"

"But I don't like children," she insists. "I never have. They—they have runny noses and sticky fingers. Ugh!"

"Well, you won't have to like little Otto," says I. "Him and Nellie can ride in front with me, and after we get to a hotel you don't need to see him again until we're ready to start next mornin'.

Some mothers are like that, anyway. You just gotta act natural and leave the rest to us. Nobody'll ever suspect you ain't celebratin' your wooden weddin'."

"Strikes me it would be rather a lark,

Millie," puts in Wilbur. "Why couldn't we try it for a day or so, and if we didn't like it we could ship them on by train? Let's."

"But what would people say—your folks, and mine?" she objects.

"Why advertise?" says I. "Nobody need know unless you tell 'em."

So, after stallin' around for half an hour or more, she agrees. Even gets somewhat cheered up at the prospect of bein' able to fool people, and half grins at one of Wilbur's near-comic cracks.

"But I shall not touch the horrid little creature—not once," she announces. "I'll not even promise to look at him."

"That'll be all right, too," says I. "Then we roll at five? Good?"

Well, we did, but I expect we got off so prompt mainly because Mildred didn't have time to think up anything more to stew about.

Before we left Colonel Icks gets me one side for a final word. "I hear that Mildred has been developing another whim," says he.

"Yeauh," says I. "I been in on it."

"I haven't," says he. "I've been too busy with the guests. Is—is it anything you can possibly—"

"Absolutely, Colonel," says I. "She's gonna have what she wants. I got it all fixed."

"Thank heaven!" says he. "I was afraid— There! They're ready."

And inside of two minutes after the word is passed we're off in a cloud of dust. I had my neck stretched as we came to the little park, wonderin' if Nellie would keep the date, or whether something had come up to stop her. But there she is with the kid. I almost scooped 'em aboard as a fast express picks up mail from a flag-station, and if anybody was trailin' us they'd had to be steppin' on it to have been near enough to notice.

I got to hand it to Nellie for bein' a good sport, for she never asks why nor where, and it was more'n an hour before I has time to drop her even a hint. But finally, with Mildred and Wilbur gassed in behind us, I has a chance to put her wise.

"Shy bride on a honeymoon tour," I says, noddin' back at Mildred. "Couldn't bear the thought of strangers gawpin' at her and suspectin' they was newly-weds. Almost had hysterics because nobody could tell her how to bunk 'em. Then I finds you. Get it? You're billed as the nursemaid."

"And little Otto?" asks Nellie.

"Oh, yes!" says I. "For the time bein' he's her little darling."

"Hers?" says Nellie, her eyelids narrowin'.

"For publicity purposes only," says I. "As a matter of fact, she hates kids."

"She does, does she?" says Nellie, stiffenin' her chin.

"Well, she's off 'em," says I. "Anyhow, you won't find her hoggin' his society. You and him'll make the trip in front with me, and you'll have quarters all to yourself, you two, when we make our stops, so what do you care what goes on the hotel register? In four or five days we'll make Biddeford."

"I hope it'll be four," says she. "How anybody could hate little Otto!"

"It ain't so much that she hates others," says I, "as that she likes herself. You know?"

"Huh!" says Nellie. "If it wasn't for gettin' home—"

Well, that's how things stand when we started. And anybody that could spot us for a lovey-dovey outfit needed second sight, for Mildred is no cuddly little party. She sits up prim and proper on her side of the limousine, hardly lookin' at her new hubby. It was Wilbur who slides back the glass panel and makes friends with Otto. Also he's the one to suggest to Mildred that if the little fellow is to be passed as theirs he ought to be costumed different.

"Shouldn't we stop in the next town and get him some things?" he asks her.

"I suppose so," says she. "But couldn't Mullins do it?"

Believe me, Mullins did, and with what Wilbur slips me and with Nellie's help at

pickin' 'em out we sure fixed up that youngster so nobody need have been ashamed to own him. Say, when he toddles out of the store holdin' me by one hand and mother by the other, him all dolled in a pink-and-white blouse effect, with little knickers underneath, and new shoes and socks— Well, he had more'n one woman stretchin' her neck after him.

"See!" he announces to Wilbur. "I dot pocket wiv hanky in." And then he springs that smile of his.

"Oh, I say, Millie!" says Wilbur, nudgin' her. "Just look."

"Yes, yes," says Mildred. "But let's get on."

Maybe she still had her doubts about not bein' stared at by strangers. But as we unloads at this resort hotel if there was any starin' done it was at little Otto and Nellie.

"Don't forget now," I reminds Wilbur. "It's Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Collins, nurse and child, when you sign up."

Anyhow, if ever a bridal couple was disguised, they was. We makes a ten-o'clock start next mornin' with never a head turned. I don't know when I've ever had such a light job, either. For as me and Otto gets better acquainted he turns out to be mighty entertainin' front-seat company. He's one of them bright kids that sees everything and wants to be told all about 'em.

"What's zis for?" he asks. "What 'oo do dat for?" And he has me explainin' the whole works, from the pressure-gage to the gear shift. Also Nellie has to tell him why the cows look over the fence at us, and what the peep-peep birds are doin' on the telegraph-wires, and where the farmers take the hay they're pitchin' onto the long carts. Until he gets tired and climbs into her lap and goes to sleep, and then he's some picture.

It was durin' the third day out that Wi bur asks Mildred if she'd mind havin' Otto in with them for a while.

"Oh, I suppose I can stand it for an hour or so," says she.

I noticed, though, that they kept him there for the rest of the afternoon, and it ain't long before he's makin' up to Mildred. Course, he's kind of shy about it, but when he's that way he's trickier than ever. Next I knew he had her smilin' at some of his remarks, and when we makes our next overnight stop it's between her and Wilbur that Otto toddles into the hotel, with Nellie trailin' behind. Goin' through the Mohawk valley we hardly had Otto in front at all, and when we gets to a swell place in the Berkshires Wilbur announces that they've decided to lay over for a day or so.

"Millie thinks the little fellow is getting tired from such long runs," says he. "Besides, there's a nice playground for children here, with a sand pile and everything."

"Score up for Otto," I whispers to Nellie. "There's one she don't hate any more."

We hung there two days. Then at Swampscott we took another rest, so little Otto could get some sea air and go wadin' on the beach. Near as I could judge Mildred was gettin' kind of strong for havin' the youngster trottin' around hangin' onto her hand. For people would stop and watch 'em, and ask Otto what his name was, and want to pat his hair and exchange chat with him. Looked like Mildred had found a new way of edgin' towards the center of the stage. I expect, too, that the kid had won her, like he did most everybody else. She bought toys for him, and debated with Nellie what he should have to eat, and told her which suit to put on him.

It was late the second day of our stay at this Swampscott place, when I was just bringin' 'em all back from the beach, that Otto collected his biggest gallery. He'd been wadin' right on the edge of the big waves, and he'd seen a man catch a fish, and a little girl had let him help her build a sand fort, and he was all excited, with his cheeks as pink as rosebuds and his blue eyes bright and sparkly. Mildred was showin' him off to a bunch of other guests, with Nellie in the background and me waitin' around with some wraps.

Folks were gatherin' around the group,



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skin's deep cells, forcing out all dust, dirt and face powder. A soft cloth or facial tissue removes all cream and pore-deep dirt. To make doubly sure, pat fresh cream on again. Remove once more. Finish with a dash of cold water or a rub with ice.

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## Fair femininity switches cigarette smoker to a pipe

It is always interesting to hear how pipe smokers come to discover their favorite tobacco.

Ed Maher frankly admits there's a "she" in his case. And to her he gives the credit for his present pipe-smoking enjoyment.

Larus & Bro. Co.  
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Gentlemen:

I happen to be a student at the University of California, and since I first started to smoke I have always smoked cigarettes.

One day SHE said to me, "Ed, dear, why don't you smoke a pipe. I think those long straight-stemmed pipes are so much more manly-looking than cigarettes."

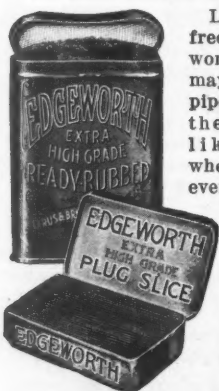
So, naturally, I had to buy a long-stemmed pipe and a can of well, we'll call it "Blubs Mixture tobacco." Immediately with a certain feeling of pride in my new pipe, I "lighted up" and proceeded to have my tongue bitten. I tried almost every brand I had ever heard of, but none satisfied me.

Sadly I had to confess to HER that as a pipe smoker I was a good diletant.

"Did you try Edgeworth?" she asked. "That is what dad smokes, and he's always smoked a pipe."

So to make a long story short, I was forced to try Edgeworth, and all that I can say is that if every fellow that has tried to accustom himself to a pipe, started with Edgeworth, there would be very few that would go back to cigarettes.

Yours sincerely,  
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[—the Edgeworth station. Wave length 258 meters.]

smilin' folksy, when all of a sudden I sees a long-faced gink whose map looks kind of familiar. For a minute or so I couldn't place him, but as he pushes in where he can get a good view, it comes to me all of a sudden. The Reverend Weir West!

Well, it don't take any super-brain to picture the next act. In a second or so he's gonna discover a couple of young people that he's married off less'n a week ago displayin' themselves as a complete fam'ly party, and when that registers he's due to get a large-sized jolt. What he's doin' here so far from the rectory I ain't got any time to figure out. On his vacation, most likely. What I thought of was givin' Mildred the stop signal. But I couldn't catch her eye. She was too busy talkin' to one of Otto's admirin' lady friends.

"What a dear little fellow!" says the lady. "And how old is he?"

"He will be three in February, the fifteenth," answers Mildred, cuddlin' the youngster.

"The darling!" says the other. "You must think the world of him."

"Perhaps I do," says Mildred, blushin'.

And the Reverend Weir West has heard the whole dialog. You should have seen the look on that horse face of his. I didn't know, for a second there, whether he was gonna blow a gasket or not. He opens his mouth once or twice, like he was tryin' to say something, but nothing happens. Then he stares again, as if he couldn't believe his eyes, his ears get the color of a five-and-ten front, and the next I know he's turned and beat it.

"If he goes blabbin' about this," thinks I, "there'll be quite some explainin' to be done. The management might turn us out."

But I expect he didn't dare, or else he was afraid some of the joke might be on him. Anyway, we pulls out of there without bein' asked to account for anything except the bill, and by noon we was up past Portsmouth.

"Biddeford next stop," I calls back to little Otto, who, as usual, is ridin' with Mildred and Wilbur. "You gonna quit us there, or are you goin' on with your Uncle Spike?"

"I dot to stay wiv my Gammy," says he. "Gammy got cookies for me—sug-ger cookies, in jar. Huwwy up an' take Otto to Gammy."

Which seems to act on Mildred like somebody was tryin' to pinch her wrist watch.

"But, Wilbur!" she protests. "I—I don't want him to leave us."

"Me either," says Wilbur. "I'm afraid he must, though. That was the bargain."

"No, no!" objects Mildred. "I can't give him up. I—I think he's a little dear. Oh, you must do something, Wilbur. Can't—can't we adopt him?"

As she's on the verge of another catfit Wilbur tells me to pull up alongside the road while they argue it out. He has some session with her, I'll say. And the more he talks the more she insists that she wants little Otto for her

very own. So at last he puts the proposition up to Nellie.

"No," says Nellie, prompt and decided.

"But," he goes on, "if I should make it worth your—"

"No, thank you," says Nellie. "Not if you gave me a million. He's my baby boy and I love him. I—I—"

Then she gets weepy, too. And say, with her moppin' her eyes on the front seat and Mildred sobbin' in the back, it was almost damp underfoot. Wilbur stands it for a while, tryin' to soothe 'em, and then he gives it up.

"Let's have a smoke over it," I suggests. "Give 'em time to simmer down."

He thinks that might be a good idea and we walks down the road a piece. I has to admit that when I got this hunch I didn't look for it to work out quite this way.

"Nor I," says Wilbur. "I—er—understood that Millie disliked children. But she doesn't, you see. Really, though, I can't take Otto away from his mother."

"No," says I.

"And Millie wants him so much," he sighs. "Or one something like him," I adds.

"Eh?" says he. "But how—where—"

"Say, listen," says I, steppin' up and whisperin' in his ear.

Honest, you'd never guess by the way he pinks up that such a thing had ever occurred to him. But after the first shock wears off he bucks up like a reg'lar fellow and walks back to the car.

"Now that will do, Millie," says he. "Stop crying. It isn't a bit of use. We are going to take little Otto to Biddeford right away and leave him there with his mother. And you're going to forget all about him."

It's the first time he's shown as the big noise of the sketch and it has a surprisin' effect. Mildred does as she's told and stares at him sort of dazed and admirin'. About three o'clock we dropped our passengers and from then on I was drivin' what most anybody could guess was a pair of to-have-and-to-holders. For Mildred had acquired the snuggle-up habit and she don't seem to care who knows it. As for Wilbur, he's some happy bridegroom.

It was on the last day of the home-stretch he asks if I can't come to Buffalo and shuffer for 'em steady, addin' that Mildred is different now and isn't going to miss little Otto at all.

"I am, though," says I. "I'm gonna miss him a lot—and Nellie."

He gawks at me a second. "You—you mean, Spike, that—"

"Uh-huh," says I. "I'm plannin' to drift back to Biddeford myself."

"Oh!" says he. Then he beams and hammers me on the shoulder friendly. "I wish you luck, Spike. This settlin' down with a nice little family of your own—that's the life."

"I dunno," says I. "But I might be just sport enough to take a shot at it."

## A Harmless Flirt (Continued from page 103)

disembarking on the farther shore they were surrounded at once by a screaming, shrieking mob of donkey boys. Standing bewildered on the sand, they were pushed hither and thither while the two guides shouted, the native police lashed out indiscriminately with their whips, the patient donkeys had their heads pulled hither and thither and ever behind them golden light crept into the air and the strange, mysterious band of mountains prepared disdainfully to receive yet another tourist invasion.

Edward Mellon's stout figure perched on a very small donkey seemed to sum up the whole of the British attitude to noise of this order. "There's no doubt," he said, "about the ability of these people to govern themselves; just listen to them!"

Clara was happy; it was right that these donkey boys should make this disturbance, right that they should have got up so early as though for some supreme experience; something was going to happen to her today, something extraordinary and wonderful; she didn't

care if she never saw England again; those mountains held something for her alone.

She made the donkey boy urge her animal along in front of the others; down the straight road to the Colossi she cantered, the fresh morning light about her, the air growing with every moment more golden, and all her cautionary instincts, her little plots and plans, her discretions, her foresights, her little earthly wisdoms thrown to the far distance where the sand flowed out from the very heart of the green. The two Colossi astonished her. They were gigantic, of course, but everything in Egypt was gigantic; it was rather the kindness of their attitude that touched her; they seemed so benevolent and friendly as though they had given her their guardianship.

Near the ugly and isolated Chicago House they all paused and the guide harangued them. Clara paid little attention to him; she was now at the foot of those strange and mysterious mountains. Already, although the morning was still young, they were hot as though made

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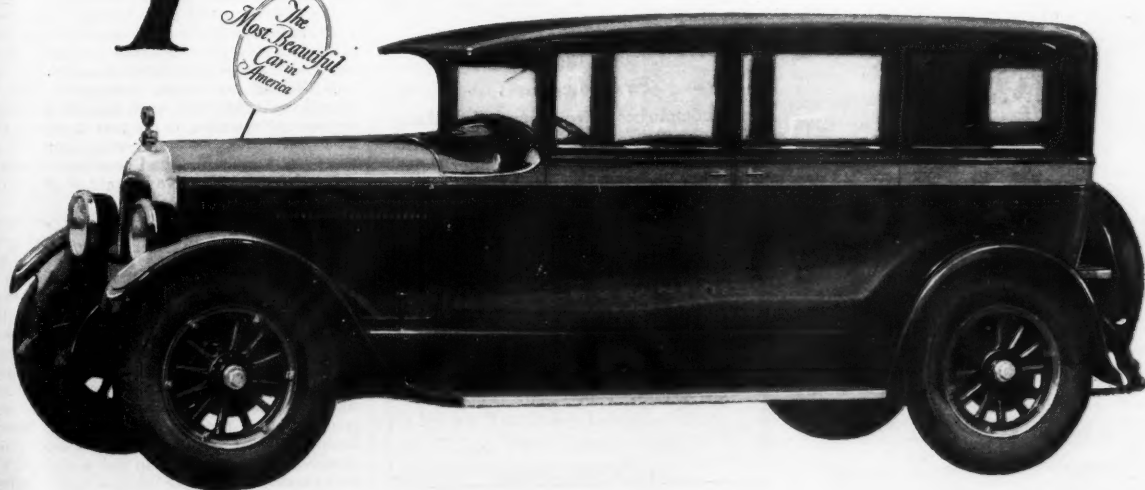
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of some fierce and unyielding metal. Within these were the Tombs of the Kings and although Clara had as a rule little imagination she could see, as though it were occurring before her eyes, the long winding procession so brilliantly colored, purple and crimson and blue, of priests and singers and wailing women, threading their path slowly through the strip of green and then turning into the defiles of the desert and cutting their way into the very heart of these hot, glowing barriers.

As they themselves moved on she was silent, paying no heed to the chatter of the others around her; then unexpectedly she was conscious of Montague. He too was silent, riding his donkey apart from the others, staring at the mountains as though he were demanding that they should open for him and for him alone. He was different from the others, different because he so strangely resembled herself; liking him was liking herself, and as she had always liked herself better than anyone else, so therefore she liked him better. She had an irresistible temptation to draw near to him and for that reason kept away.

They rode on and on, at first keeping at the foot of the hills, then sweeping round into their very heart.

When at length they were completely encircled they all stopped and the guide began again: "We have now arrived, ladies and gentlemen, at the Tombs of the Kings, the most famous spot in the whole of Egypt. There are a great many tombs, ladies and gentlemen, and we shall not have time today to visit more than three or four, such as for instance that of King Rameses VI, Rameses III and Seti I."

His voice faded away; they passed in an awestruck stream through a wooden barrier, were shown the entrance to the tomb of the so famous Tut-ankh-amen, climbed a little to the right and turned down into the very bowels of the earth. The transition was immediate and astounding; a moment before there had been nothing but dust and glare, such gritty dust piled high above them so that they were choked with the casual disorder of it and burnt with the heat that seemed to lick their bodies as though with a dragon's tongue; and now in an instant in the very heart of the earth, color—radiant, gorgeous color—flamed upon them from every side.

The high walls were lighted with electric light and this modern innovation might have distressed Clara had she had time to think about it, but she had not. On every side of her were gods and goddesses, the sun-god in the shape of a beetle with a ram's head, the king whose tomb it was sacrificing to the gods of the dead, birds with human heads, the serpent-headed goddess Nephret, gorgeous and kingly snakes, the sacred fields, the plowing and sowing even as they had seen it this very week on their passage up the Nile. And all these figures lighted with a blaze of color—rich, burning gold, intense red and fiery blue.

It was the gold that finally remained, whether here or in the tombs near-by that they afterwards visited. This gold persisted, weaving a web about her, hiding from her all her past life, all her present existence. That it should be buried here, such immortal beauty, so pure and stainless, in the very depths of this dust and heat! So in her own heart for all these years something had been buried, something that was still alive in spite of all her determination to disown it.

She withdrew from the rest and sat down on a stone in a little cool chamber and, looking up at the sacred black bull Neri, stared about her with a sigh of utter contentment as though at last she had found what she had always been seeking. Two square pillars supported the ceiling, yellow stars on a blue ground; the boat of the sun moved across the wall towed by four men preceded by spirits with a coiled snake. Here were Asiatics with pointed beards and colored aprons, negroes and, farther on, serpents spitting fire; and above them Horus, leaning on his staff, watching twelve condemned souls swimming in the waters of the underworld. The color glowed and vibrated



"MY ENTIRE BODY, on account of chronic constipation, was completely run down. This condition brought about heartburn, a coated tongue, dull eyes, a sallowness of skin blotched with pimples and recurrent boils, not to mention undue fatigue and headaches. On the advice of a specialist in stomach and skin diseases, I began to take two yeast cakes every day. The result: Within five weeks my stomach was restored to normal working order. Today my body is strong, vigorous, and healthful."

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THIS FAMOUS FOOD tones up the entire system—aids digestion—clears the skin—banishes constipation.

## Dividends in Health . . .

Constipation, skin, and stomach disorders, corrected—the reward of invincible energy again—through one simple food

NOT a "cure-all," not a medicine in any sense—Fleischmann's Yeast is simply a remarkable fresh food.

The millions of tiny active yeast plants in every cake invigorate the whole system. They aid digestion—clear the skin—banish the poisons of constipation. Where cathartics give only temporary relief, yeast strengthens the intestinal muscles and makes them healthy and active. And day by day it releases new stores of energy.

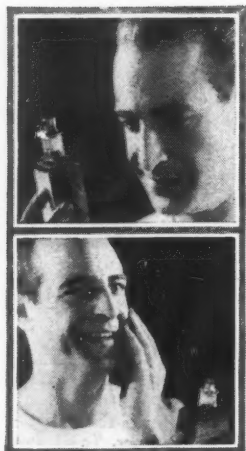
Eat two or three cakes regularly every day before meals: on crackers—in fruit juices, water or milk—or just plain, nibbled from the cake. For constipation especially, dissolve one cake in hot water (not scalding) before breakfast and at bedtime. Buy several cakes at a time—they will keep fresh in a cool dry place for two or three days. All grocers have Fleischmann's Yeast. Start eating it today!

And let us send you a free copy of our latest booklet on Yeast for Health. Health Research Dept. K-42, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington Street, New York.



"I SUFFERED from my stomach. I had severe headaches and had boils and pimples on my face and body that were annoying and embarrassing. Nothing gave permanent relief until I used Fleischmann's Yeast. In about three months the headaches had entirely stopped and the pimples and boils had completely disappeared."

MRS. CARL G. JOY, Baltimore, Md.



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THIS hot weather is hard on the newly shaven face. The skin needs special protection. Aqua Velva, Williams new after-shaving preparation, is as soothing as a massage. It keeps the skin like velvet all day long, just as Williams Shaving Cream leaves it.

1. It tingles delightfully when applied.
2. It gives first aid to little cuts.
3. It delights with its man-style fragrance.
4. It safeguards against sun and wind.
5. It conserves the needed natural moisture in the skin. (Powders absorb this—leave the skin dry.) Aqua Velva keeps the skin flexible and smooth all day long.

Send the coupon or a postcard for a generous test bottle FREE. The large five ounce bottle at your dealer's is 50c (60c in Canada). By mail postpaid in case he is out of it.

*For use after shaving*



Made by the makers of Williams Shaving Cream  
The J. B. Williams Co., Dept. 97, Glastonbury, Conn.  
(Canadian Address, 1114 St. Patrick St., Montreal)  
Send free test bottle of Aqua Velva.

Cosmo. 7-26

as though the sun's rays passed and repassed; there was absolute silence. Something moved her to tears; she wished that she were anyone in the world but Clara Cobbett.

When they came up into the dust and heat again she found Montague standing beside her. "What do you say?" He spoke hurriedly and almost breathlessly. "Let's get away from the rest of them. We are going over to the rest-house to lunch—some of them are going to ride round; let's walk over the hill. There's a marvelous view from the top."

They started to climb, not hearing the adjurations of the others. It was steep, the stones rolled from under their feet, the heat was at every moment more intense, the dust rose in little spirals about their legs as though it were alive.

Soon they turned the corner of the dusty path and were quite alone. It might have been not only that there was no one else in the world but that there never had been anyone else. Hot though she was and tired, Clara was conscious of a glory such as she had never known in her poor little life before; it was as though she had not been able to escape from the bowels of the earth without dragging some of that gold with her. Was it even now too late? She would soon be middle-aged and set, her life given over to tiny things that did not matter, with no real friends but only a thousand acquaintances, with no real ideas but only a thousand notions bred of newspapers, with no real hopes but only a frantic desire never to be left alone for a single moment lest she should realize how lonely she was, with no real unselfishness but only a number of sentimental reactions. This was what she would be, she saw quite clearly, did not in another instant of time something happen to her.

Something did happen to her. They turned the final corner surmounting the ridge and the whole world was at their feet. Far below them was the desert spotted here and there with what looked like gray boulders, in reality the Rameseum, little temples shining in the sun like white shreds of calico, and beyond them the green scarf of the irrigated land sliced by the glittering sword of the Nile, and beyond the green again purple hills, light shadows against the sky. They sat down and gazed. She began to cry, she did not know why; she was not a sentimental woman, she hated anyway to cry before a man; but there it was—she could not stop.

He turned to her. "Look here," he said in a voice thick and unsteady, "we've got a chance if we can hold to it. It's probably our last chance. We're alike, you and I; you must have felt it all these days. We're both of us frittering everything away and soon we shan't care if we do. We're as selfish as you make them; we haven't been forced, you see, either of us, into caring about anyone or anything more than ourselves; we've got just enough money to make us loathsomely independent. Will you marry me? Shall we try together to make something of life, something for one another instead of for ourselves?"

She nodded. He drew her close to him and with a strange mixture of terror and triumph they contemplated the scene.

It did not seem to Clara long before they were down on the plain once more, and soon they had passed the noisy throng of sellers of imitation scarabs and alabaster vases and had joined their companions in the security of the rest-house. A large table had been kept for their party and a very merry party it was.

Clara stared in front of her. What had she done? That event from which all her life she had been escaping had leaped upon her. Without turning her head, out of the corner of her eye she could see Montague. Did she love him? Was she glad that she had said that she would marry him? She did not know. Out of the corner of the other eye she saw Edward Mellon, with whom now in the ordinary nature of things she would be conducting a lively if careful flirtation. He was ready for it, she saw; every

word that he spoke and every movement that he made was directed at her. And directly opposite to her was Horace Tripp, who kept telling her how he had missed her.

She must not look any more at Horace Tripp and Edward Mellon; she was an engaged woman. But where, oh where was that other world in which Horace and Edward had simply not existed? Where was that strange ecstasy, that wonderful sense of new discovery? She only knew that she was tired and not as hungry as she ought to be and deep in her heart conscious of a sense of irrevocable destiny.

They visited the Rameseum and the temple of Dehr-el-Bahri. This last was exquisite—the temple of the great queen who had ruled Egypt like a man but yet had, as the little rooms with their delicate figures and their wonderful colors showed, all the delicate grace and tenderness of her sex. How beautiful only this morning this temple would have been to Clara; but now she had a consciousness that Montague's eye was upon her and when he drew towards her instinctively she drew away. She wanted to lay her head upon his breast, to hear him say the most loving things to her, but she did not want, oh no, she did not want that to go on forever.

Having watched with a good deal of close attention the married life of others, she knew that it would probably not go on forever; it would be followed by that charming thing known as companionship. But why could they not be companions and have other companions too? Modern marriage was like that—you were both free and nevertheless devoted. But were you? Didn't married people pretend that that was so in order to put as good a face upon it as possible? And here she was thinking of herself again and her own wishes and desires. Why could she not recover that earlier ecstasy and why was it that she had already noticed that Montague was growing bald and was a good deal stouter than he ought to be?

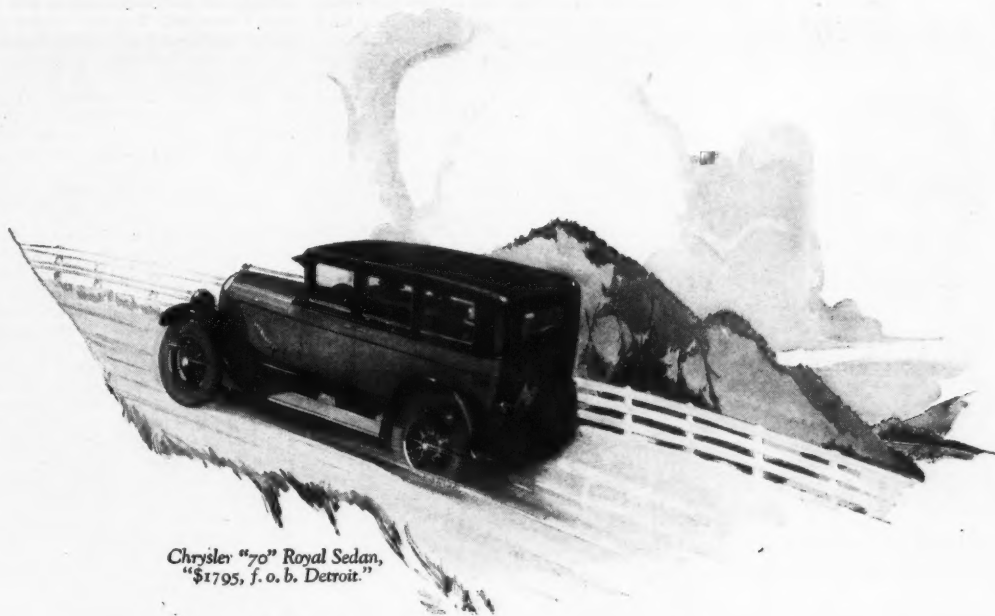
All the way home through the beautiful Egyptian dusk Clara fought her battle. It was as though on either side of her donkey two ironical spirits kept pace with her. She knew that both of these spirits despised her. One of them told her that this was her very last chance, that although she was a poor sort marriage might make something of her; and the other told her that she had better remain free and careless as she had been, not being worthy of anything very much finer. The rose faded into gray, the waters of the Nile as they crossed sank into insubstantiality so that they seemed to be sailing on air. The boat received them with its lights and chatter and gay-colored lanterns, but the glory was gone.

After dinner she made an excuse and went to bed but not to sleep. She lay in her cabin staring at the ceiling. The whole of her past life crept as though it were ashamed in front of her.

She could see nothing but little scraps of useless conversation, little winks and whispers, little expeditions that led nowhere, little promises that even when they were kept meant nothing, little subterfuges and lies and disguises, little cheap presents of tinsel and rolled gold, little feathers and ribbons and scraps of color, little agitations about little illnesses, little worries about little meannesses, little sham dogmas about little unreal agitations. She saw all these quite honestly and yet she didn't want to leave them. That was the life she was made for and with Montague it would be no different. One glimpse of beauty is not enough to save you when you have been denying beauty for years. You cannot, and she knew it only too well, have your cake and eat it.

Out of all this litter she saw only one thing quite clearly, that on the whole when she had given her word she had kept it and so she would keep it with Montague; she would not ruin his life. How truly he was in love with her! His whole soul had been in his voice when he had asked her to marry him. It was true that he had said that she was as worthless as he, but now this one great thing had come to him, how mean of her if she robbed him of it! A fine sense of nobility came at last to rescue her; she





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**CHRYSLER "70"**—Phaeton, \$1395; Coach, \$1395; Roadster, \$1525; Sedan, \$1545; Royal Coupe, \$1695; Brougham, \$1745; Royal Sedan, \$1795; Crown Sedan, \$1895. Disc wheels optional.

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# CHRYSLER

# "70"

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## Let your own face decide this test

*{ Money back if not satisfied }  
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Millions of men know that Mennen's takes the fight out of the wiriest set of whiskers. The razor swishes through in record time. No pull or scrape. It's a quick, clean shave that *stays shaved* all day long. And I don't mean *maybe*.

But I want you to let your own face decide. So here is the proposition:

Tomorrow morning, lather one side of your face with the cream, stick or soap you've got the cleanest, quickest, most comfortable shave you've ever had in your life—why send back the used Mennen tube and I'll refund your money, with postage.

If you can't feel the difference instantly—if you don't find that on the Mennen side you've got the cleanest, quickest, most comfortable shave you've ever had in your life—why send back the used Mennen tube and I'll refund your money, with postage.

By the way, Mennen Skin Balm is the finest after-shaving treat ever invented. You ought to give it a try. A little squeeze gives you a wonderful, tingly, cool freshness. Tones up skin—removes face shine. Astringent—reduces pores. Greaseless, absorbed in half a minute. Comes in big tubes. Nothing to break or spill. 50c. And, of course, don't forget that we make Mennen Talcum for Men.

*Jim Henry*  
(Mennen Salesman)

**Here's another chance to win a magnificent \$50 traveling bag\***

Send in an answer (100 words or less) to the question below. The most interesting answer wins the bag. Contest closes July 17. I am the judge. Watch for next contest in an early issue. \*You don't have to go out and buy any Mennen product in order to enter contest.

**HERE'S THE BAG**



**THE QUESTION:**

**What do you find the best after-shaving preparation and why?**

Mail your reply to The Mennen Company, Jim Henry Contest, 375 Central Ave., Newark, N.J.

did not truly love him, but at least she would not break his heart by denying him. And with this noble resolve at last she fell asleep.

It was late when she awoke. She dressed slowly, feeling tired and overwrought but still ennobled by this surrender to a man's great love. She went on deck. In the dining saloon were only Edward Mellon and the Anglican clergyman, both of them emphatically enjoying a very fine breakfast. Her meal finished, she came out and looked for Montague. She was going to be very sweet to him; she was going to show him that she could appreciate to the full this devotion which had come to him like a great storm sweeping away the shallows of his nature, turning him as he had said to her into a real man at last.

A servant met her and in his odd broken English—how funny people were, and why didn't they learn one's language?—explained that he had a letter for her, a letter from Mr. Fraser, who had left the boat an hour before. Left the boat? Yes, with all his luggage, not coming back. She tore open the envelope. The letter was as follows:

"Dear Clara,

"It's no good. I have been fighting myself all night. I was led away yesterday by the

splendor of our surroundings and said more than I intended. You can imagine the kind of brute I feel, but just because I have seen how you love me I feel it the more my duty to break away before it is too late. I should be no good, Clara, as a husband. Your love for me will always be a beautiful memory to me, but I don't love you as a woman like you ought to be loved. Forgive me and try to think no more of

"Your true friend,  
Montague Fraser"

The letter fell from her hand; then quickly she stooped to pick it up. Someone had started to play the phonograph, someone on shore was singing, Edward Mellon came out of the dining saloon wiping his mouth, Horace Tripp came dancing down the deck towards her, the sun was shining, a lovely ripple played upon the river as though it were laughing at her. Even as she felt her wounded pride color her cheeks, she felt also a great burden slip from off her back. Already the self-contempt of the last night was as far from her as the glories of yesterday morning. With that old merry but insincere smile she turned towards Edward, crunching the letter in her hand. How cruel, how monstrous, how false this man had been, but—oh, what an escape!

## Out of My House, Girl! (Continued from page 93)

ominous note in his voice. Blaine had tripped him once when he had run thirty yards with the ball and was within an ace of making a touchdown. He clenched his hands.

"Terry is just a little bit of—what is it you call it?—a roughneck, and he is literally Sally's slave," Mrs. Sexton babbled on, "so you see how it was. But you will meet both Sally and himself tonight, and she will explain everything and make Terry apologize, I am sure. And, David, even in jest, you must not give the impression that you are going to play Shylock with Sally. There is a rumor of the kind, and there is a good deal of feeling about it. But I shall quash that silly gossip tonight."

David felt like waving his hands above his head and telling her where she could go. Neither this woman nor Watross should snatch from him the coals of fire he was preparing to heap on Sally Glidden's head.

"I'm a yachtsman before I'm a sentimentalist," he said curtly; "and Glidden's Point has the snuggest harbor I've seen around here, and a good dock when it's repaired."

Mrs. Sexton reminded herself that in a diplomatic crisis silence is often the most effective weapon. She pretended to listen.

"Why, that must be the car," she said, rising. "Come; I did not realize it was so late."

Throughout the short drive she remained thoughtful and absent-minded, but by the time they entered the club-house she was beaming again. For the next few minutes David was kept busy bowing before dowagers, young married women and girls; and then he caught sight of Sally.

Cinderella! Yes—but after the fairy godmother had waved a wand over her and turned her into a story-book princess. She faded the rest of them into a back drop against which she stood out dazzlingly. Her frock was a gauzy yellow shot with red which went well with that blue-black hair of hers, and she was all race, grace and radiance.

David forgot the girl he had just asked to dance with him and stood there blinking his eyes at Sally, and the next moment she was swept away by Terry Blaine. It came to him then, the great idea—an inspiration of the devil. The floor was pretty crowded; it was about the fifth dance. David was as good a dancer as he was a golfer, and so he kept circling nearer and nearer Sally and her partner and just as they were in the center of the floor and completely surrounded, he shot out one foot and neatly tripped Terry. Terry, realizing that he was falling, released his hold on Sally.

But she had sized up the situation like lightning and without wasting a moment, flopped down beside him and lay there limp, her eyes closed.

When David saw her a cyclone of panic struck him. He was the first to reach her and he picked her up and started for the door, murmuring wildly: "What have I done! You aren't hurt? Say you're not!"

As he stepped over the door-sill, she opened her eyes and gave him a wicked look.

"Clever of you," she said, "but not quite clever enough."

He stumbled blindly into the nearest room and dropped her on a couch. Mrs. Sexton sent the maid for water and hunted for smelling-salts; and while her back was turned, David bent down and gave Sally one good kiss, full on the mouth. She shot up, but the maid was at the door and she had to drop back and play unconscious once more.

David left the room in a daze—no man who had just kissed Sally Glidden could remain in a state of dull normality—and wandered out on the porch. There he saw Terry Blaine leaning against a pillar, gingerly feeling a large lump on the back of his head and profanely expressing his opinion of Morton.

"Here, you," he shouted, lunging groggily forward, "I'm going to give you another dose of what you got yesterday."

David gave him a shove that sent him spinning back, and two men caught and held him while he uttered violent expostulations.

"Don't be more of a fool than you can help." David was icily contemptuous. "And get this—I'll not fight you tonight here, but tomorrow, any time you say, and any place, so it's on the edge of the bay, I'll—"

"You'll do nothing of the kind." Sally, miraculously recovered, flashed between them, her head so high that about all David could see of her face was the point of her chin. "There's been enough of this schoolboy nonsense. Terry, you come in with me and dance—you can get around somehow. Come!"

Terry, with a few low growls and mutters, went to heel; and David, left alone, walked to the edge of the porch. Moonlight dreamed over a mysterious and changed earth. He had kissed Sally Glidden!

He struck a match to light a cigaret. A moth fluttered toward the flame and blundered against his cheek. A kiss . . . flame and a moth's wing. Her eyes . . . blue fire through falling lashes. Oh, what the devil! Mrs. Sexton was tapping him on the arm.



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She wanted him to meet another of his mother's old friends. Good Lord! He had already met a mile of them.

All right, he was coming. Back to the mariottes and the platitudes. Just one thing was certain, though. There had been enough of this hoodlum stuff. That was out. He would tell Watross tomorrow to close with Sally Glidden on her own terms.

But Sally rose before he did and took the law into her own hands and the decision out of his. She formally notified Watross that she was leaving the house forthwith. She had leased a patch of ground on an estate across the road, and there she would set up her stand and pitch a tent in which she proposed living until she could have a bungalow built a little farther back in the woods.

David walked leagues up and down the floor of Watross's office.

"What does she have to go and do a thing like that for?" he asked bitterly. "There must be some way to stop it, Mr. Watross. Tell her to take the old eyecore as a free gift, or any other way she'll have it. Look at the position she's put me in! I can't go around shouting that I didn't evict her."

"Not very well," said Watross grimly, "after what you said to Mrs. Sexton last night. To claim now that you really intended something different would only make you ridiculous."

"Can anything make me more ridiculous than I am?"

"Sally can," Watross spoke with conviction. "If you try to explain the situation, the general verdict will be that you tormented her by holding off your decision, and that she showed the proper spirit and got out before she was thrown out. You won't gain anything."

"All right," David brought his open hand down, smack, on Watross's desk. "I'll show her that two can play at her game. She's doing her best to force me out of Westchester. She thinks I'll never have the nerve to stay and face the music. Well, I will do just that. I am going to live at Glidden's Point."

An expression of human pity softened the lawyer's withered face. "My boy," he said gravely, "I would think that over pretty carefully before I acted on it."

Possibly Morton might have listened to him if Mrs. Sexton had not put in her diplomatic oar when next he saw her.

"Of course you and I know, David, that you have no intention of taking over the Glidden property, but Sally feels that you are playing a cat and mouse game with her, as she calls it, and she doesn't see herself in the rôle of mouse. She doesn't think it suits her type."

"She's got her characters mixed," said David harshly. "I'm the mouse, and under the paw of the most—" He controlled himself, although the veins stood out on his forehead in the effort to do so. "Mrs. Sexton, I am taking the house just as soon as Miss Glidden finds it convenient to move out."

And thus he embarked on his martyrdom. It required all his resolution those first few weeks to stick on in the dilapidated old place. It depressed him unspeakably. He set carpenters to work on the house and turned a score of gardeners loose on the grounds; merely to look at them gave him acute melancholia. And it didn't add to his comfort to discover that even his own household was against him.

How empty was his triumph only he knew. He held the fort physically, but the mental ascendancy was all Sally's. In spite of his tenancy of the premises she still remained the mistress.

He was sick of being haunted by her. She was always there across the road, in plain sight; but worse than that, her presence pervaded the place. Sometimes her voice seemed to echo through the rooms; again, he would hear her light steps flying down the stairs.

As time passed, the situation became unbearable and one night David became actively rebellious. This pin-point in Westchester wasn't the only spot on the globe. He wasn't tied to it. He'd go on a cruise; and the devil and Watross could look after

the place and do what they pleased with it. His yacht! The one place that was entirely his own.

As he went down to the wharf the next morning and saw his refuge, graceful as a swan on the blue water, his spirits rose. He untied a skiff and rowed out to her.

But as he stepped on the shining deck, he stopped and involuntarily raised one hand to his temple, wondering if he had become subject to hallucinations. For there, before his eyes, on his sacred yacht, was Sally, engaged in affable conversation with the captain. She looked surprised at the sight of him, but neither ashamed nor confused—regarding him rather as if he were the interloper and not she.

Frigid as an icicle, David stood waiting, his chin as high as hers. He offered neither comment nor salutation.

"I was just asking Captain Ward about the best way to get some lumber across the bay," she said carelessly, "and now I'll be putting back to shore."

This was the last straw. She had carried her warfare to the high seas and invaded his yacht, corrupting his captain. The attitude of the man showed his subjugation; sailors were notoriously soft about women. David's blood was up. He had played her game and lost every move, but now he would show her that she was not the only ruthless pirate in the world; he was another.

"Get under way at once, Captain Ward," he said. "We will go up the Sound and possibly cruise for several days." At the same time he deftly cast adrift the boat in which she had rowed out from shore.

The captain hesitated and looked at Sally, but she was leaning against the rail, gazing unconcernedly out over the water, so he touched his cap and moved aft to give the order. David waited, expecting protests, indignation, fire-works of some sort.

"But how delightful, Mr. Morton!" Her voice was positively cooing. "A day on the Sound will be like heaven to me. I really haven't had a holiday since I don't know when; and Peter will be quite able to take care of any customers who may happen along. Of course I shall have to be back for the evening rush; but if you decide to keep on, you can put me ashore anywhere, and I will go back by train."

David walked over to the side and looked down into the churning water. He was frightened. Impulsively he had let himself in for a new complication, and new complications, he had learned, were to be dreaded when Sally was in them. There was no knowing how she would turn this incident to his discredit, but she would do it. That was certain.

He tried to brush away his sense of confusion. His yacht was his last ditch and he had to hold it. If he couldn't keep his mastery here, he was no better than a jellyfish. His jaw squared. He wouldn't give up the ship. There must be some way to meet the situation.

He thought hard, and gradually a crafty plan unfolded itself. She had said she was willing to stay out until sunset. All right, he would go back to her and play the flawless host, and then in about an hour he would give abrupt orders to put back to the Point. The only conclusion she could draw from that was that she had bored him so unutterably that he couldn't stand the enforced companionship. He strolled over and sat down beside her, smiling and cheerful.

"I had no idea you were so fond of sailing, Miss Glidden, or I should have asked you before."

She was looking down at her hands clasped in her lap, the tiniest of quirks in one corner of her mouth. "How kind of you. But I have very little time, you know."

"I appreciate that," he said. "Your activities are so manifold." He was pleased with that; it was particularly neat.

She smiled but did not answer. She was leaning back in her chair, lazy and relaxed, a really fitting ornament for his smart yacht in her white woolen frock, her white-shod feet demurely crossed. The breeze ruffled her dark



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hair and brought the color to her cheeks. There was a sparkle in her eyes and her lips were parted as if to drink in more of the air. It was a crime for any young fiend to be so pretty.

It suddenly struck him that she really was enjoying herself. Even his presence could not mar her obvious satisfaction. He invited her to take the wheel, and she surprised him by her skill as a navigator. Incidentally he made another discovery. She was as easy to talk to as she was to look at. They were young; both of them laughed over the same things or at nothing at all. It was a laughing universe, one of those magic, unreal days when there is an ecstatic splendor in the air.

He lost all sense of the passage of time, and was amazed when he was asked if luncheon should be served on deck.

"Oh, yes," Sally cried, "by all means. I don't want to lose a minute of this."

He looked at the food placed before them with a critical eye. This should be something quite special and sublimated. It was part of the miracle that it was; the cook had surpassed himself.

Sally openly gloated over it. In a vague, untranslatable way, her enjoyment of a free day hurt him. Through some metamorphosis of feeling, he saw the whole affair between them in a different light. One free day was nothing in his life, but she was chained to her hot dog stand. He had regarded that little booth as a rather theatrical fad, the fantastic pastime of a modern girl, but now he saw that she could not have built up her successful business without expending a lot of time and thought and energy.

"Why do you do it?" he asked abruptly. "Run that stand, I mean?"

"I'm showing you, am I not, that I have to eat? And don't say the rest, please."

"The rest?"

"What everyone said at first. That there were so many other things I might have done. I dare say there were—but what? Here was I growing up on Glidden's Point, with the leaks always getting worse in the roof and the whole place going to wrack and ruin. No training for anything, and an income that wouldn't keep a tame crow. There were kind old ladies who offered me a home. I could have carried pillows and smelling-salts around after them, and been their pet dog or cat tender. Shucks!" said Sally. "Not for me!"

The picture was terribly vivid to him. For a time he smoked in silence, and then he said, almost pleadingly: "Will you tell me why you chose to evict yourself?"

Zip! How her pansy eyes could flash!

"You couldn't jerk the strings for me to dance. Did you think that I was going to wait passively while you took time to pull the petals off a daisy? She goes, she stays—she goes, she stays. I guess not."

"I never hesitated a minute." He gave his solemn oath. "I—I just wanted to punish you a little."

"Tit for tat," she came back. "Maybe I thought you needed a little punishing too. If you could have seen yourself that evening when there were droves of motorists waiting, and that temperamental oil-stove got one of its sulky fits. You, with your wretched two pennies, and your air of the lord of the manor condescending to jest with a daughter of the tenantry!"

"Oh, I say, we're quarreling again!" He looked at her aghast; it had been so perfect—and now bickering. "I won't."

He got up and walked away. Again he leaned on the rail and looked out to the far horizon. A haze was creeping up, the wind had changed, the glamorous patina which had overlaid the world had vanished. Riotous, untrammelled emotions were seething within him. It wasn't going to end like this. It couldn't. He would not let it.

He went back to his chair fired with this determination. She had picked up a magazine and was glancing over it.

"Do you read many stories?" he asked.

"Reams of them," she answered absently, without lifting her eyes, "when I get time. Why?"

"Then you must know that where the hero and heroine start out hating each other, there's only one ending. She marries him sooner or later."

She put her thumb in the book to hold her place and looked at him coolly. "I've thought of that," she said deliberately. "Yes, it has crossed my mind more than once. Of course you could give me everything and the stand does wear on one. But on the other hand, there is—you."

"What's the matter with me? I have my own opinion of myself—nothing much. But I'd like to hear yours."

She reflected a minute, her chin resting on her hand.

"You're rich, and you are not bad looking or stupid, but you have a most unusually vile disposition, domineering, arrogant and revengeful. Idle too. I can see your fortune ahead of you without cutting the cards or reading tea-leaves. In twenty years you will still be floating about on your yacht, putting in at all the proper places, flattered—"

"I may have plans that you know nothing about," he interrupted. "But what about you in twenty years?"

"Can't quite say. I'll be using my head, though. There's no use denying it"—she bit a vexed red lip—"you have put a crimp in all my plans, smashed them like egg-shells, darn you."

"You just naturally have to swear at me, don't you?"

"Why wouldn't I? Do you think I am content to sit down and run a hot dog stand to the end of my days? Not on your life. I had everything all set to pull the old house down and turn the grounds into money."

"Then for heaven's sake, do it."

"I can't. You've crabbed the scheme. I can't take anything from you. I hate you too much."

"You can hate me all you please." He straightened his spine. "But you can't go on making me the goat. I've stood all I mean to, and I'm going to have it announced publicly tomorrow that we have come to a settlement. The loan has been paid, the deal is closed."

Their eyes met and clashed.

"Will you never stop driving me to extremes?" She threw out her hands. "If you do that, I shall announce something publicly tomorrow too, and that is my engagement to Terry Blaine."

"You try to marry him," he blazed, "and I will kidnap you at the altar."

"Better make no promises you're not prepared to keep. Terry is quite hefty and rather impulsive, as you have reason to know."

"But my footwork is pretty quick, as Terry has reason to know. Also, you don't want to forget the old saying, the bigger they are, the harder they fall."

"I believe," she said slowly, "that you are just revengeful enough to want to marry me so that you could take it out on me for the rest of our natural lives." She shrank from him a bit ostentatiously.

"There might be other reasons, Sally." All the fierceness was gone from his voice. "You remember I kissed you once."

Before she could shrivel him, the captain approached to call their attention to the weather; the glass was falling rapidly and thunder-heads were banking in the southwest.

"Oh, do get me home before the lightning comes, Captain!" Sally begged, paling. "I've lived on the coast all my life, but a storm always fills me with terror."

David looked out over the slaty water and up at the sky.

"Yes," he said reluctantly, "we will have to put back."

Sally picked up her magazine again and buried herself in its pages. David smoked abstractedly. It was not until Glidden's Point was in sight that he broke the silence between them.

"I suppose that Terry and Peter and a mob of outraged villagers will be waiting at the dock to beat me up."

"Terry is in town overnight."

He caught the arm of her chair. "Sally! Sally!"—lingering over her name caressingly, coaxingly. "Haven't you tormented me enough? Don't be mean and small any more. Be kind and gentle and—tender, Sally."

She got up, threw her magazine into the chair hard, and walked down the deck without even a glance at him. Nor in the process of disembarking did she utter a word. When they reached the dock she sprang out of the boat and with the slightest, stiffest of bows, hurried off into the growing gloom.

Back in the house again, David studied the sky with a growing anxiety. Not for himself; that crumbling roof must have weathered many a gale. But the same could not be said for that flimsy tent or that playhouse booth across the road.

From the window he could see Peter fussing over the pegging of the tent, and once he saw Sally's face at the window of the booth, but only for a minute. That toy shack was all the refuge she had, and she was afraid of storms!

The butler appeared to announce that Mrs. Sexton was on the telephone. David hurried to it.

"Good evening, David," said the calm, slow voice. "A frightful storm is gathering"—as if he didn't know it—"and I am worried about poor little Sally. She may be killed in that booth. Surely even you cannot sit in your safe house and know that she may be perishing just across the road."

"Even you!" He gritted his teeth and made a gruff answer. He felt that he must rush over and drag her to safety, but his experience of her mocked the impulse. She would elude him in some way, probably take to the woods where there was even greater danger.

Then he saw a car driven at racing speed sweep down the road and stop. Terry Blaine jumped out.

The next minute a white sword of lightning flashed through the air; there was a terrific crash and a clatter of stones on the roof; the house rocked. One of the fancy turrets had been struck.

David rushed outside to see what was happening, and forgot it. Instead, he saw Sally break from Terry's grasp and run across the road and down the avenue.

"The house is falling down," she cried. "David! David!"

The wind had cut loose now and was shrieking like a steam siren. He was peppered with sand and tiny pebbles. The world went flying by in a cloud of dust.

Sally and he collided. He turned, caught her arm, and they raced on toward the house, blown like two leaves along the drive.

A ball of fire fell and bounded over the grass; there was a mighty crash of thunder. Sally stopped and flung herself into his arms. She burrowed her head in his coat. He felt her trembling from head to foot, and held her closer.

That last flash was a final exhibition of the cosmic fireworks. The rain began. It fell in torrents.

Sally twisted her head to look up into his face. Their eyes met and clung.

"I was coming to you anyway, David," she murmured. "Honestly I was. I love you. I love you."

There was the sharp, hard spatter of hail on the leaves. To David it was a shower of rose-petals.

They were drenched to the skin, but neither of them knew it.

"I love you, Sally. I've loved you from the first moment," David was whispering. He covered her wet face with kisses.

A series of discreet, repeated coughs at last broke through their trance. The butler loomed through the mist, holding an umbrella.

"I fancied you might need this, sir," he said. "It is raining heavily, sir, and—dinner is served."



## The Necklace of Marie Antoinette (Continued from page 31)

diamonds of the age upon his conscience.

Veritably upon his conscience, for Bassange—honest man!—had had no taste for the adventure of collecting them. "It is beyond us," he had said; "we should not fly too high. Suppose the du Barry were to die!"—and a hundred more unpalatable supposes, and Boehmer, irritated, had taken his own way and now ruin or success as brilliant as the diamonds lay before them.

"The game is worth the gamble!" he had said to Bassange. But was it?

As he went, a carriage drawn by six horses came lumbering noisily along the cobble-paved street, swaying from side to side on massive springs, a magnificent carriage, hammer-clothed, with silver mountings and magnificent armorial bearings on the doors. Four splendid lackeys clung precariously behind. A yet more splendid coachman drove the white horses. It was the fairy godmother's coach in Cinderella to the life, and indeed presently to dissolve also into something less than a pumpkin and rats after the same fashion.

No fairy godmother, however, looked out of the window, but a handsome, corpulent man of middle age, smooth with fat living and self-indulgence. Boehmer had recognized the arms before the man—arms connected with the blood royal of France, for this was Prince Louis de Rohan, Cardinal, Archbishop of Strassburg, Grand Almoner of France, Knight of the Holy Ghost and heaven knows what else—and at that time one of the most despondent men in France in spite of all his grandeurs.

He looked out now with a dull gleam in his heavy, handsome eyes, and signed to one of the parrot-plumed lackeys behind. The man leaped down and ran to Boehmer, picking his way daintily down the street.

"His Eminence would speak with you, monsieur. Have the goodness to approach."

Boehmer turned eagerly. In his present dreadful anxiety the mere sight of a wealthy man, one who dwelt in bediamonded circles, was manna in the desert. The Cardinal had been Ambassador in Vienna before he fell from favor owing to his unlucky jest about the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa, the Queen's august mother. How forgive a Prince of the Blood, who had asserted of the most obviously pious and exalted lady in Europe that she viewed the partition of unhappy Poland with a tear in her eye and a grin on her lips, a Bible in one hand, a bared sword in the other? This had been a dire eclipse of his glories.

Still, there were lovely ladies in Vienna with countless quarterings of nobility and magnificent estates on whose tender hearts the gay Cardinal had left his mark.

No one knew this better than Boehmer, for in his hands had been placed the order for a surprising number of rings, bracelets, pendants, with the handsome Cardinal's face choicely painted on ivory set in diamonds and forwarded to Vienna to keep "*ces belles dames*" in memory of one who had admired so many of them not wisely but too well. The Empress Maria Theresa was so shocked as to declare she would never have believed in that epidemic of rings if she had not seen it with her own august eyes. There was indeed much to shock her in the escapades of the Cardinal! But from Boehmer's point of view the question was only—could he but be interested, might he not be the very man to relieve a very anxious King's Jeweler of a very terrible burden? A chance not to be lost and he hurried forward, bowing at every step.

"Your Eminence! I salute your Eminence humbly. I trust I see you in health, Monseigneur?"

"Why, yes, Boehmer, my good friend! What I want is to ask whether you have any pearls of respectable water—but by no means a king's ransom—suitable for a ring. There is a little lady who has set her heart on black pearls—the whims of women!—to enhance

her white hand. Three—to be set with an illustration of diamonds. I wish it to resemble the famous ring which my father gave Madame de Boufflers when she first appeared at court. You know the song.

'When Boufflers was first seen at Court,  
Venus' self shone less beautiful than she did.  
To please her all eagerly sought  
And too well in his turn each succeeded!'

Well, that ring—you know it!—was one of the baits. I want one the same but at half the cost."

"Certainly I know it, Eminence, and I have the pearls, moreover—fresh from Ceylon. But half the cost! And living twice as dear! Your Eminence did not use to bargain. Ah, Monseigneur, these are hard times for my trade."

"And would not now if times favored me. But the lady, though charming, is not worth more than half of what my father has told me of Madame de Boufflers. Now for some women one would give the world were it all condensed into a single pearl."

"I have a jewel for such a lady!" cried Boehmer eagerly. "A supreme, a royally magnificent jewel for a queen of beauty or empress of the world! There is no woman who could refuse anything to the man who gave her such a splendor."

"The lady to whom I allude is worth exactly three black pearls and no more. There is only one woman who is queen of beauty, and royal also!" said the Cardinal, smiling with lowered eyes. "And she has diamonds too many to care for more."

Boehmer smiled discreetly in his turn. "Has a woman ever enough, your Eminence? You know better than I. But have you heard of my diamond necklace?"

His Eminence yawned indolently. "I believe I heard a rumor of some such thing. But, Boehmer, the pearls?"

"I will bring them for your approval, Eminence. At present I am on my way to present my duty and ask an interview later with her Majesty that she may see my necklace."

Life sprang into the Cardinal's heavy eyes, dull color flushed his cheeks. That name always touched something in him apart from all other amours. There was somewhere hidden under the mud and murk of his life a stray sparkle of imagination, of romance, dimmed, befooled, but still surviving. And the exquisite Queen touched it. The thought of her alternately shamed and stimulated him.

The lovely creature, proud, airy, the very embodiment of race and high sentiment and girl's romance playing at hide and seek with a great Queen's dignity! He had watched her before he lost court favors, a virgin wife, as all knew, failing to charm or even to interest her loutish husband, though the very safety of the throne demanded an heir. He had seen that rose unplucked, high on the topmost bough, wasting its sweetness on empty air, while the man who might have worn it in his bosom never looked that way or answered her half pathetic, half humorous little attempts to please him save when before a listening court he could scarcely turn dumbly away.

And men, knowing this, climbed as far as they dared to reach the unapproachable. There was the handsome Englishman Whitworth, the still handsomer Duke of Dorset, gay and beautiful as the long-ago Buckingham who had won the heart of a Queen of France. Had they—had he? . . . No, the Cardinal would not believe it; he trampled on the thought. Marie Antoinette had coquetted, she had spread out her charms in the sunlight as a glittering peacock spreads his network of gold and jeweled moons, for sheer delight in beauty. But more—no!

And then after eight years of so-called marriage suddenly the King had awakened

as from a drugged sleep to the worth of the treasure that all the world envied—and his wife was his wife indeed and mother of the Dauphin and Madame Royale of France.

Yet—knowing all this, how the Cardinal longed still for the beautiful, offended woman who let her eyes glide over him as coldly as a December frost when he happened to cross her path. He had seen the smile ice on her lips when he drew near and she looked through and past him as only queenly women can. But in his own way he loved her in spite of it. Not a high love—desire, backed by self-interest and stayed on thwarted pride, but yet the best in him.

And now this fellow, this Boehmer, a mere Jew tradesman with gutter blood in him, might enter her cabinet and display his wares and hear her flute voice rise and fall in interest and delight as she examined the treasure laid before her. And he, Louis de Rohan, whom the King must officially call "my cousin," might as soon hope to enter Paradise—in itself improbable with such a life as his—as that sacred sealed cabinet which held the one treasure his soul coveted with the only passion left in his life.

What was the use of his descent from Anne of Brittany and the blood royal of France? What the use of the proud motto of his house

Roi ne veut,  
Prince ne daigne,  
Rohan suis

if the only woman he valued never cast a look but of disdain his way? No doubt she had heard details of the life at his Embassy from her stiff mother and resented it as a woman and as Queen of France also. Hopeless!

"She will not buy your necklace," he said coldly. "Public affairs are too disturbed, and the people are beginning to thrust their pigs' snouts into financial matters and others too high for them. The King would not hear of it."

"Your Eminence knows the King is so madly in love with her Majesty now, making up for lost time, as all say, that if he once sees it about her neck—"

Had Boehmer fully persuaded himself or was it his desperate hope of getting rid of the glittering nightmare? He spoke with conviction and the Cardinal flushed a dull, jealous red. He made a sign to his men to drive on and Boehmer was left in the street bowing and protesting that the black pearls should be at his service and at a price the most reasonable that—and so forth, until the great man was out of hearing. Then he pursued his way, tremulous with anxiety.

The two most charming women in France sat in the Queen's boudoir a few days later—Marie Antoinette and her close friend and Mistress of the Household, the young widowed Princess de Lamballe. They shone sweet as flowers against the rose satin hangings, but not the simple flowers that make sweet constellation in April meadows. Each was the product of centuries of race and training inherited from dominant ancestors surrounded by submissive slaves. The power of kings and pride of warriors spoke as surely in every line of delicate nose and lip as the imperial coquetry of the dead women whom men must please even to exist in the courts these women swayed as the moon sways the tides in her cold changes.

Each was "the last word of a thousand years—fine flower of Europe's slow civility," and therefore no garden for the pleasures of lesser men, but exotics fenced with glass, fostered in artificial warmth, admired, worshipped at a distance, but never for daily love and household uses.

Yet both were perfectly at ease with their kind and each other, dressed at the moment more simply than the wife of many a rich

bourgeois in Paris, full of gaiety where they felt themselves on their own ground, yet capable of stiffening in a moment into a fair frost-piece if any hint of familiarity should come between the wind and their nobility. It would be interesting, thought a man who waited in the antechamber within sound of their voices though not of their words, to speculate how either or both would act in a moment of dismay or danger. Ridiculous thought! Such could never confront these darlings of fate. God Himself would think twice before damning princesses of their quality, whatever their sins. He smiled a little at his thought, remembering. . . . A man passed him, preceded by one of the Queen's ladies, on his way to the cabinet. Lucky dog! Count Axel Fersen thought, with a movement of surprise.

But no—it was Boehmer, the King's Jeweler, and he of course was a necessity of majesty. What shining toy tempted the loveliest now? he thought. Would of all earthly wishes that he might be the one to offer it and see those proud eyes soften for a moment even over the beauty of a stone cold as her own royal heart. He watched Boehmer's discreet entry with a smile half melancholy, half bitter, and returned to his idle talk with the officers on duty outside.

As to Boehmer, he was at the moment inaccessible to sentiment. He knew—none better—what was due to majesty, but the necklace filled his universe, and on entry, after the necessary obeisances, he saw before him only two lovely young women who, being what they were, would certainly succumb to the glittering temptation. He congratulated himself that the Princess was present, for her amazement and delight would carry the Queen away if that were needed. Everyone knew the influence possessed by her young Mistress of the Household and that in matters of taste her word was law to Marie Antoinette. His heart pounded in his breast.

The scene was striking. The room had an effect of dim richness and subdued splendor, very impressive in itself. There were magnificent commodes, the doors gleaming with the richness of red lacquer and ormolu, and behind the Queen a priceless cabinet with Sèvres medallions of the loves of goddesses and nymphs—roseate, azure, smiling as only loves in porcelain are apt to be. The carpet was in *vert tendre* and rose from the looms of Aubusson, and the gilded chairs and settees glimmered in white brocaded satin, the patterns delicately illuminated with flowers and garlands.

If one counted the treasures of that room, not forgetting the pictures, they might outweigh the value of the necklace itself. But these were treasures of the Crown of France, the other—the property of Messrs. Boehmer and Bassange!

A lady in waiting was present; in stiff hoops and powdered eminence of hair, she stood erect on duty behind the chair of the young woman in white, straightly falling India muslin with a crossed fichu over her bosom, who represented the majesty of France. Thérèse de Lamballe sat on a low seat without arms beside her. Both returned Boehmer's greetings with friendly grace. He was so much below their own sphere as to render any precaution of distance unnecessary.

"Madam, I thank you Majesty with deep humility and gratitude for the favor accorded me of presenting a very wonderful work of art to your gracious notice."

"But what is it, monsieur? I must beg you not to tempt me, for as you know I am still in your debt for the diamond earrings. It is true I meant to be economical, but what would you have?"

"Madam, it would not be for the happiness of their people that great queens should be economical. It is known to you that they love to see the splendor of courts, and that their money is circulated."

He addressed her in the third person so impossible to represent in English. She laughed like a girl.

"True, but yet . . . Well, but where is it? Have you left it in the antechamber?"

"Madam!" protested Boehmer. "One does not leave jewels worth a king's ransom in the antechamber even of kings. Nor does one carry them visibly. I drove through the streets with terror today!"

"Come nearer, Thérèse, and prepare to be astonished. I will wager it is the diamond bracelets the Grand Mogul had made for his chief Sultana. I had heard they were to be sold in Paris."

Not a word said Boehmer. With the solemnity of an archbishop officiating at high mass, he put his hand in the deep breast pocket of his soberly handsome brocaded waistcoat or undercoat, and drew out a slender case specially made for such conveyance of the treasure. It was not its state receptacle, so to speak, but an incognito, though elegant enough withal for a queen's handling, and with the intention of suggestion Boehmer had had a crown royal stamped in gold on the purple leather.

Before her Majesty was a small table enameled in miniatures of shepherds and shepherdesses in the gardens of Versailles. On this he laid the case and kneeling on one knee opened it, then rose and drew back.

Heavens, how the light imprisoned sprang to light released! Bright sparkles danced on the very ceiling as it laughed at its lover the sun. The Queen, laughing also, put her hand over eyes as bright. The Princess opened hers in amazement. Yet the one had known the Austrian crown jewels from her cradle until the happy day when those of France were lavished to illustrate her beauty, and for the other the jewels of the House of Lamballe were a fit setting.

But this was a world's wonder.

"But, monsieur, impossible! Are they real?" cried the Queen at last. "Naturally I have seen a few larger and as brilliant, but such an assemblage! Thérèse, what do you say?"

"Magnificent!" The Princess was hovering over them like a bee above roses. She showed unashamed, unconscious, the primeval longing of the woman for adornment and glitter. "Can a bride forget her jewels?" asks the Scripture, and if not a bride, certainly not a Queen and her Mistress of the Household.

They lifted them, fingered them, commented, gloated, while Boehmer stood back delighted, sure at last that his happy day of release was come. Foolish Bassange who had croaked like a raven of loss and ruin—what news should he carry back to shatter the gloom into triumph!

"Put them on, Thérèse, that I may see the effect!" cried the Queen, elate.

"Oh, Madam—your Majesty first. Permit me!" and in a moment fair fingers loaded with emeralds had clasped the happy jewels about the beautiful throat, made, it seemed, for such decoration. In the combination of simplicity and splendor was the most bewitching contrast in the world. Such diamonds with such beauty clad in white muslin was a dish for playful Graces.

Thérèse de Lamballe clapped her hands, laughing with pleasure.

"You should make it the fashion, Madam! A white ball at Versailles, with avalanches of diamonds! A winter fête—I have it! White, white everywhere like snow, every head powdered, swan's-down, white fur, and the glitter of diamonds for frost crystals, and your Majesty in these."

The Queen flew to the wonderful Louis Quatorze mirror in gilt claws and roses which reflected the room, sumptuous as befitted the casket of the jewel it held. Her figure, startlingly white and slender, with rivers of splendor on shoulders and bosom, confronted her. She turned, flushed and beautiful, to her friend.

"Oh, if only I need never wear those abominable hoops again! I look like a woman in these lovely draperies, and in the hoops like a painted queen of diamonds—no better than the rest of the pack. What figure need a

woman have in hoops? One might be knocked, and not a soul the wiser."

She halted, remembering Boehmer's presence, and the Princess released her from the splendid harness, laying it on the table, while together they counted the stones and admired the pendants.

"Really, there is no choice!" Thérèse de Lamballe said at last. "To permit anyone else to wear it would be to acknowledge oneself vanquished. It could not be!"

"I feel that too," the Queen said seriously. "But then—the cost! And times are so bad. Bad harvests, trouble with the English, discontent everywhere. What is the cost, monsieur?"

"The cost, Madam, is infinitesimal for such a jewel. Your Majesty will laugh when you hear it. One hundred thousand pounds. And that"—as he saw the look of alarm—"not by any means to be paid at once. Only in instalments and perfectly at his Majesty's ease. Madame la Princesse is right. For the honor of the royalty of France there is none other should wear it. So convinced was I of this that I had the crown stamped on the case."

The Queen sat with great blue eyes staring at the necklace. It had been a bitter winter, delicious for sleighing at Versailles in gilt sleighs shaped like swans, buried in a warm snow of costly furs, delicate feet slipped into heated muffs of fur, only the sparkle of bright eyes and frost-rouged cheeks emerging from the warmth to meet the bright cold. How her children had loved the sight of long white wastes of snow, the snow statues raised in honor of King and Queen by a loyalty as short-lived as the works of art themselves. Yes, a heavenly winter. She could not remember that she had ever enjoyed one more.

But then—the people! Reports came in from the provinces of starvation and death in the biting cold. Versailles itself was in the grip of poverty. As the sleighs glided over the sparkling surface one saw women huddled in rags, leading gaunt children, the very ghosts of famine. The snow was not so amusing for them. One stopped, one caused one's equestrian to lay a golden louis in hands unused to gold. One received their thanks and blessings and glided on conscious of queenly grace in the action.

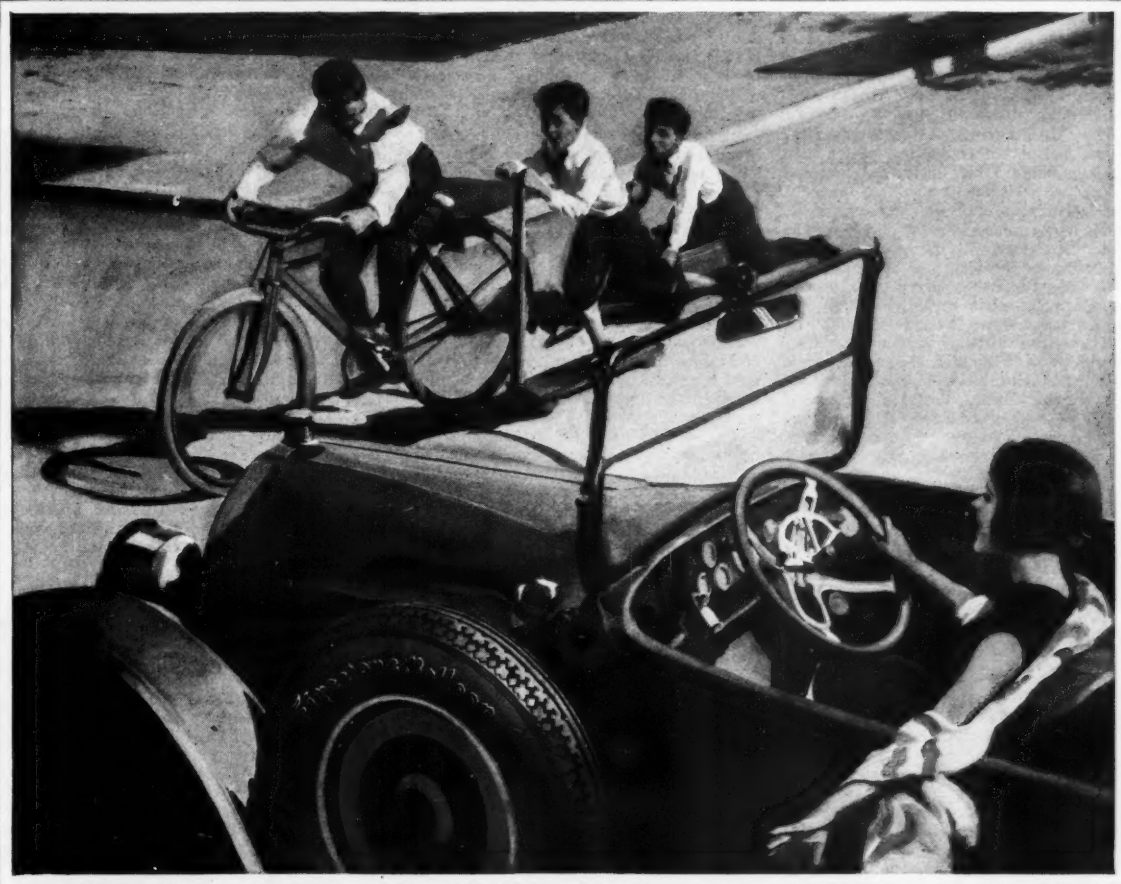
But a louis here and there did not go far. The King had spent much money on cartloads of wood to warm the wretched homes and one reason why she was late in her payments to Boehmer for the earrings was that she herself had joined him in that gift to poverty. And still the people died. Ill-fed, ill-clothed, what chance had they? But what could one do with such wide-spread misery and no one responsible? Nothing. The only way was to forget it—if one could—and continue sleighing.

That was possible; but—these diamonds. No doubt it was a moderate price, but for what immoderate luxury! Quickly sensitive, the tears gathered in her eyes as she sat looking silently at the necklace. That a queen of France, whose right to splendor was unquestioned, must doubt, must hesitate before a mere necklace seemed at the moment the cruelest injustice of fate. Her mind wavered to and fro like a flag in a gale while Thérèse watched her smiling as one watches a pretty child hesitating between its sweetmeats, and Boehmer looked on in satisfaction. At that moment he was as sure of his money as man could be.

At last the Queen roused herself from reverie.

"The King must see it. I know the price is moderate enough for such jewels, but you are aware, monsieur, that there are many poor—poor, moreover, who do not realize that it is fate and not the King's government which stints them. If it were to get abroad that I had made such a purchase there would be pasquinades, satires—in short, it would be misrepresented in every possible way. You could not have chosen a worse time."

Boehmer bowed and protested without a



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tinge of fear for the result. No time could be ill that placed such stones, the collection of patient years, at the foot of the throne. He would be profoundly honored if his Majesty would condescend to inspect them. The Queen, sighing, dispatched her message.

"And I think, *Thérèse*, that when the King comes we had better see them alone. I want his frank opinion. I long for the necklace, but you see well I must not be rash."

With a little *moue* of disappointment and her charming reverence the Princess glided out of a concealed door leading to the inner apartment and the moment the King was announced the lady in waiting followed her example, leaving the royal couple alone with *Boehmer*.

The King nodded to the jeweler and threw himself heavily into a chair. Very far from the model of an accomplished gentleman was Louis the Sixteenth, King of France and inheritor of much unfulfilled renown and a descent that most other European kings must envy. Yet let none judge by appearances. No man can increase the stock of intellect with which he is launched in life, and there the patron saints of the House of Bourbon had not been lavish. Knowledge he may harvest if he have the chance and will. Louis had had neither, and a deplorable education distracted by court intrigues for place had left him as ignorant a man as any in his dominions except for such morsels of statecraft as must come his way in the life he was compelled to lead.

If one owns him a fair shot and rider with a bent for mechanical tasks such as his wife called "his extraordinary taste for everything that relates to building, masonry, carpentry" and so forth, one has probably described the outward man and left little unsaid. If the workmen were busy with repairs it was his delight to—not look on with a courteous word of encouragement as a King might do, but to pull and haul paving-stones, toss a plank over his big shoulders, and so forth. Horrible indeed for a royal bride to endure who might have expected sugared flatteries, a plumed hat swept to the feet or pressed to the heart in bows, and had none of this from her strange uncouth husband—must indeed see him loafing in the courtyard, sometimes lending a hand when he got the slightest encouragement, rather than lounging in her perfumed salon.

But the wife was wiser than the bride, as they are apt to be. She knew now that under that hulking exterior lay one of the kindest hearts in the world, a heart oppressed with a sense of a destiny too great for its powers, and therefore condemned to a most misleading reserve.

There had come a day when she knew that her charms and graces had not blown away like thistle-down on a wind as she supposed, but that the rough dumb boy had watched, had learned, had realized that graces as well as conscience are necessary upon a throne and that though he could not shine himself, could never develop more than a dull civility with which to meet his people, he could yet delight to see her shine beside him—he toiling with false or inadequate ministers to retrieve the burden of an irretrievable past. And at first she pitied him as one may pity a spirit prisoned in the rough bark of a cleft tree; and if such pity is not love, at least it is its kin and may one day develop the psychic wings within its own dull chrysalis.

Diffident, clumsy, the elegant courtiers beheld their Dauphin and King, but those bright blue eyes of his Austrian wife were clearer; she knew there was a something inarticulate, fine—if one could reach it. Something that spoke of conscience in a conscienceless world ruled by his shameful grandfather the King and his du Barry. And so it came about that to the shy young man's delighted consternation, one day she rushed into his room and clasped tender arms about him, crying with tears:

"I care more for you every day, my dear husband. Your frank, honest character charms me, and the more I compare you

with the others the more I recognize your worth!"

Was it any wonder that though he could never speak of that moment, henceforth he was the lover of the one woman who understood him?

"Everything she does is lovely," he said to a great lady who tried to catch his attention. "We must own that she is charming."

She was that and more in his eyes, a something spiritual, exquisite, from a higher world than his own, a wonder clasped miraculously in very earthy arms. And what could he deny her? Better if he could have done it sometimes and affected an austerity he could never feel.

She desired the *Trianon*—that charming house where only she could be less than Queen of France, a great lady playing at rusticity—and she had it, and the cruel, embittered comments on royal extravagance caused by it. And now she desired a new jewel! Well—it would be hard enough if the Queen of Hearts could not also be the Queen of Diamonds. It would be a difficult matter; but if she wanted it . . . That was the mood in which the King entered the room that held his treasure, heavy and clumsy of gait but a true lover in his heart's heart.

"Show me the rubbish!" he said with would-be levity and held out the big flat-fingered hand of an art fan from the ruffled lace of his velvet sleeve.

The Queen lifted it in almond-white, rose-tipped fingers delicately, as befitted its worth, and laid it in his; those hands of hers were celebrated throughout Europe for their high-bred beauty, and the very touch of them sent a light thrill through the coarser hands they brushed in passing.

"Beautiful!" said the King.

He sat a moment turning it over curiously, causing the light to play upon it from different angles. To him it was extraordinary that anyone should care for such things. What did they mean? Nothing. A bit of honest handicraft was worth it all. But yet—beauty and rank claim their adornments. It was a bewildering part of the odd necessities of life, for to him she was more lovely in the muslin gown she wore at the moment than in all the hooped and glittering splendors that held him at a distance and made a goddess of her.

Then how natural—how natural she should desire this wonder! Think of the ugly Charlotte of England sparkling in the diamonds an Indian Prince had laid at her flat feet! His eye fell on the arched and high-heeled shoe pressing the gilded footstool beside him. Watteau and Lancret might have taken it as an inspiration, and lovers kissed its print upon the velvet. Where was such beauty?—and more than beauty—charm crowning it with an indescribable attraction that drew all hearts. Rank, yes; but she could have spared that and yet been a world's wonder.

He sat so long musing, his slow mind taking its own devious track to the goal, that *Boehmer* began to quake in his shoes. Did his Majesty disapprove? Had he forgotten? The Queen observing it put a light finger on her lip and remained looking steadily at the King. Presently he roused himself and laid the necklace on her knee.

"Of course you must have it, *Madam*," he said. "I would not speak of it until you saw it, but *Boehmer* submitted it to me the other day, and my mind was made up then that if you approved it, it could be no one else's. It is suitable to you and you only."

Bright red flushed up into *Boehmer's* sallow cheeks. Praise be to God! The relief was painful. Indeed, he drew a long breath, like one released from bodily torment. But not a word did he utter. He watched while the Queen let the jewels fall through her fingers like water, her head bowed over them, her eyes invisible. And it seemed that much time went by.

Suddenly she looked up and made a sign to the jeweler which waved him away to a distant window. He went, stationing himself

half behind the heavy curtain. They were virtually alone.

At last, with downcast eyes she said in a low voice: "Will it be difficult?"

"Not to you, *Madam*."

"But difficult?"

"It can be done. That is all the Queen needs to know." His heavy mouth relaxed into a very kindly smile—as when the little Dauphin snatched at the magnificent order of the Holy Ghost, dragged it off his father's breast. The child could not gage its value. He wanted it. That was enough.

"I am more than the Queen. I am your wife. Again I ask—will it be difficult? What will *Calonne* say when he hears?"

*Calonne* was the Comptroller General and his very name in those days that were coming upon them seemed to her a word of sinister omen. It took life and color from the heap upon her lap.

"*Calonne* has found money before. He can find it again."

"But the means?"

"That I cannot tell. It is his business. Put it on that I may see it."

"But it is believed that with *Thérèse* and the *Polignacs* I fill my hands from the Treasury whenever I please. It has done an infinite harm."

"That is a lie. What matter what liars say? You should know better."

She hesitated, then lifted it mechanically and clasped it about her throat. Even the King's dull eyes lighted at the rainbow lights it flung about her and the new meaning with which it illuminated her beauty.

That beauty was of a type as unusual as the woman herself. Others might match the perfect lines of the figure, and in a hoop all figures are pretty much alike. Who but the Queen could wear that white drapery clinging about her and melt from one perfect pose of grace and dignity into another as unconsciously and naturally as a flower swaying on the wind?

None. His heart knew it.

Others also might have that blended beauty of lily and rose, and the large blue eyes—but never their witchery of gaiety and melancholy. Another woman of *Marie Antoinette's* coloring would have crowned it with golden hair and become banal and obvious with what is in itself a beauty. There too nature had been lavish to her. Her hair was the last touch of refinement and distinction—*blonde cendrée*—masses of almost ashen blond hair making the most exquisitely softening background for coloring too brilliant had the frame been golden. That was exquisite—no one had hair like the Queen's. It was as though it had been etherialized by a delicate veil of powder, and there were those who predicted that when it became gray it would still further stress the unapproachable distinction that all her court envied.

But how the diamonds lighted it up! She glittered starlike from the darkening depths of the mirror—then turned to meet him, smiling doubtfully.

"You like it, *Sire*?"

"I like it, *Madam*."

She stood, her hands dropped beside her, while *Boehmer* trembled in the distance anticipating the recall and decision, then, lifting her arms, unclasped and laid it on the enameled table.

"I will not have it, *Sire*." Dead silence, the King staring at her mutely. "I will not have it," she repeated slowly, as if to strengthen herself.

Something in his acquiescence must have struck a vibrating chord of pity. Yes, it would be difficult—difficult indeed! True, *Calonne* must carry it through, but the King would suffer, and for a king—not that squalid form of suffering if she could help it! For the voice of France was going up in cries and groans, the people waiting for bread. Taxation was frightful and yet did not bring in enough to pay the daily way of the country. There were sounds of rebellion, muffled and sinister, stealing on the ear, not to be traced to

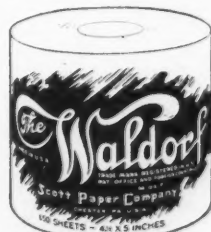
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this source or that, but all-pervading, terrifying. And the world knew well that the dead King with his appalling vices, his appalling lavishness to the women who shared them, had left a debt which the people must exact with interest one dreadful day. Also across the Channel English ships were watching, biding their time, fiercely resentful of French participation through Lafayette in the breaking away of the American colonies from the dominion of George the Third. They too had their score to settle. These thoughts and many more passed like gray phantoms through her brain as she replaced the diamonds slowly and delicate-fingered in their case.

"You shall have them, Madam. I say it."

She raised her voice, soft but clear as a bell of crystal. "Monsieur, have the goodness to return. The decision is made!"

From the velvet curtain which half draped him, Boehmer advanced elate, bowing deeply at every second step. Never a doubt now clouded his face—his heart. The nightmare was lifted and prosperity rose like a dawning sun. Aha!—what would Bassange have to say when he returned empty-handed? Boehmer could see him rubbing his fat little hands and rallying "the man of affairs" as he called the senior partner.

"Madam!"

She held the case towards him with a gesture of finality. "Monsieur, France needs ships of war. The Queen cannot buy a diamond necklace."

There was dead silence, the King staring mutely at her, his face indecipherable, Boehmer with dropped jaw. He had not heard a word they uttered—had taken all for granted from the King's acquiescence, for who could doubt the Queen's? Something seemed to snap in his brain. He did not intend it, did not know what he was doing, but acting on the irresistible impulse of the moment fell on his knees before her, making as if to clutch the folds of her white dress.

"Madam—Madam!" was all he could stutter. The blood charged to his brain and the sparkle of the diamonds seemed to fill it with fire that dazzled his eyes.

"Madam!" he gasped again, and awed by her look, half angry, half startled like a surprised goddess, got himself clumsily on his feet again and faced her, while she stood with one hand laid on the table. The King watched both with his heavy gaze, veiling so much more feeling than he had power to express.

"Madam!" Boehmer stammered, his breath catching in every word. "Have pity on your old and faithful servant. This is a matter of life and death to me—of more, of much more—honor! For—will your Majesty's goodness realize that not only have these jewels been a dreadful cost, but I have payments to make . . ." His voice failing for the moment trailed into nothingness—but with a sickening effort he rallied it again. "Madam, it shall be on any terms his Majesty imposes—spread out over what years he will. There is nothing I will not accept to facilitate your possession of these jewels that become you as they can no other in the world. I swear I had this honor before me all the time I was combing the earth for them. Oh, Madam, have pity!"

The Queen gathered herself together, the King dead silent beside her.

"I have listened, monsieur, and with sympathy, for I understand your emotion in view of the immense cost of the jewels—but you compel me to remind you now that you are a Frenchman and a loyal one. Consider the state of the country, known to you as to all. Is it a time when you would wish to see your Sovereigns lavishing treasure on a thing so useless, however beautiful? Suppose it were not yours. What would you feel if you heard of such a purchase at such a crisis? No, you must sell it in happier countries. There is no time or place for it here."

One does not argue with the Queen, but Boehmer's misery thrust him beyond the pale of custom. He was sobbing, dry, breathless sobs, while his hands clutching each other

expressed the broken tension of self-control. "Madam! No one need know! Keep it for happier days, and make only such payments as you approve. Sire, I beseech you! I am a ruined man. You were favorable—oh, plead with her Majesty for me!"

The King moved a step forward. "You are resolved, Madam?"

"Absolutely. With what face could I wear it? And as to hiding it!" Her look of disdain said the rest.

The King advanced on the man in his disconcerting short-sighted way which had the effect of seeming to drive people back before him against the wall. Boehmer retreated, shrinking.

"Her Majesty has expressed her will, and I, the King, say she is right. There is no more to be said. No—I am not angry—but take your diamonds and go!"

Even to Boehmer's anguish it was clear that the fiat of doom had gone forth and there was no more hope. He could not comprehend what had changed his world into hell. What had they said to one another? But what matter? All was lost. Trembling like an old man, his face a sickly white, he gathered up the rejected treasure and secured it in his breast pocket, then bowed pitifully—piteously—and crept towards the door.

The Queen stood still as an image until it closed, then turned to her husband, her eyes brimming with tears that spilled down her cheeks.

"The poor man! But what could I do? I was right. You know I was right."

He caught her clumsily in his arms and held her close, kissing her hair and brows. "You are always right—my dear. I was wrong to say a word, but I thought you wished for it and if you had—"

"You are too good to me!" she said sadly, disengaging herself. "If I had wished for it I should have been a wretch! Wear it perhaps four times a year—and see the veiled glances when I did! No. That is for women like the du Barry, for whom they made it. Forget it, Sire, and let us talk of happier things. But that poor Boehmer's face! It haunts me."

"Let him sell it elsewhere!" the King said stolidly. "We have heard the end of it now, and he will never dare to trouble us with it again."

But a cold premonitory shudder shook the Queen, as when someone walks over a grave as yet undug. She clung against the King's shoulder like one in fear, and knew there was no strength in it to save her from the poison wind of calumny which had begun to breathe through the palaces of the Kings of France.

As to Boehmer, not knowing what he did, walking stiffly lest control should slip from him altogether, he passed almost unnoticed through the antechamber. Count Fersen looked up from the game of cards he was playing in a recess with an officer of the Garde du Corps.

"The favored Boehmer does not look particularly happy!" he said.

"I suppose he has not got rid of as much as he hoped!" answered the other carelessly, "but it is madness of their Majesties to buy so much as a diamond snuff-box now. The talk of the Queen's expenses is frightfully dangerous and grows daily. Curse these cards! You have all the luck!"

"And yet she is probably one of the least expensive queens that ever sat upon the throne. It's the left-handed queens that cost the money. The Pompadour and du Barry spent as much in a month as the Queen in a year. And the King's life is simplicity itself in so far as he can control it."

"True—but—oh, curse it, Comte—you can't talk and play! At least I can't. And the poor devil is gone with his hangdog face. Forget him and play."

The poor devil had made his way out by a long corridor leading past the apartments of the Queen's waiting-women. As he stumbled





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*Try this quick and simple method which thousands of mothers now use. See the difference it will make in the appearance of YOUR CHILD'S hair.*

*Note how it gives life and lustre, how it brings out all the natural wave and color. See how soft and silky, bright and fresh-looking the hair will look.*

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**F**IRST, wet the hair and scalp in clear, warm water. Then apply a little Mulsified coconut oil shampoo.

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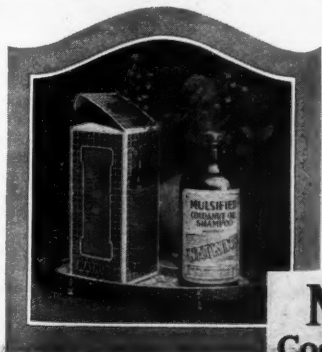
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along a door opened and a pretty woman came out, cheaply and showily dressed in an exaggeration of the fashion, throwing a word over her shoulder to the friend inside.

"Good-by, then, *chérie*. Tomorrow you shall have the almond water for the skin. It has an infusion of tree-bark in it from the Orient that acts like magic in effacing wrinkles. Try it and see. Yes—two louis. But what's a louis for beauty renewed? Not that yours wants renewing—it's a case of prevention with you. Who's the gentleman with the long face?"—in a tone of lively interest.

"That's Boehmer, the King's Jeweler, Madame Lamotte. I thought, to hear you talk, you knew all the people about court. I dare say he's been selling something to the Queen to make your mouth water."

"Mighty fine, I've no doubt," said the other, edging up. A pretty woman with brown-black hair and bright, dark eyes, a heart-shaped face and slightly tiptilted nose. But, to a knowledgeable eye, lamentably lacking in refinement. She cast a sidelong glance after Boehmer and added, "I wager her Majesty doesn't stint herself these hard times."

The Queen's woman was condescending. "Those who are about queens, madame, know that they must be fine. It's a part of their business."

"A business that's getting a bit out of date, I imagine. I wonder what she bought."

"Perhaps the diamond necklace!" the other said, yawning. "Well—I must dress for my attendance."

Lamotte pricked up her pretty ears for more. "The diamond necklace? Which? What?"

"Why, the one Boehmer made for the du Barry. One of us heard the Queen and Princess de Lamballe talking about it. There never was anything like it in the world. You ask the Cardinal to give it to you!"

This was a roguish side-dart that brought a becoming little flush to the Lamotte's face.

"How you talk! You pretty women are always suspecting others of the same tricks as your own! Well, I too must be off. I have an appointment in the apartments of Madame de Provence."

With a parting giggle she minced off on her little high-heeled shoes, her hoop billowing about her. The other turned to her friend inside.

"She knows as much of Madame de Provence's apartments as I do of the King's. The King's sister-in-law indeed and a wench like the Lamotte! Not likely, I should say! Still—she knows a lot about face and hair washes. Don't you think I look a different creature since she took me in hand? They say she knows Cagliostro and gets her notions from him."

They closed the door on the corridor. Lamotte, with her little contemptuous smile, was well out of sight, following on Boehmer's track. To her quick observation he had not the air of a man who has sold a diamond necklace or anything else. He looked stunned, dazed, almost unconscious.

She watched him with interest, for in her trade all was fish that came to her net, and heaven only knew what might turn up.

Of the scum flung up by the waters fermenting before the storm, Jeanne Lamotte was probably one of the most poisonous elements, and in view of later events it became almost incredible that a woman of her insignificance could have achieved the colossal mischiefs for which she was responsible. Yet a woman who begins the world with everything against her and a certain amount of piquant prettiness for her sole weapon must be allowed to have quick wits to back it, if no more, and quick wits go far when it comes to fishing in troubled waters.

They certainly went far in her case.

Her father was—though she kept it hidden as a guilty secret—a peasant of Auteuil, and of all names in the world he called himself by

that of Valois, the ancient royal knightly name of France, as though a peasant Englishman should call himself Plantagenet. There were days, now forgotten, when that name would have run like a trumpet-call from the Pyrenees to Normandy, but they were long over, and in the reign of Louis XIII the last known Valois occupied a poor little estate called Gros Bois and occupied himself with the somewhat adventurous business of coining. Then who was the peasant of Auteuil who bore a name so much too stately for his hovel and muddled sabots?

Some years before a court lady, Madame de Boulainvilliers, saw from her marble terrace a touching and charming sight. Nothing startling—two picturesque little peasant girls toiling along in clattering wooden sabots, each bowed under a load of wood. The curé of the village who accompanied madame in her stroll, looked over the balustrades with her and laughed a little.

"Those children, madame—it's the oddest thing in the world! If you guessed for a year, you would never guess what their name is."

"Something extremely common, poor little angels, I have no doubt," said madame, yawning a little.

"Something extremely uncommon!" her companion retorted, with a pinch of snuff. "Those children have some curious papers relating to their descent, and their name is—Valois!"

"Good heavens!" cried madame, halting so suddenly as to startle the fat lap-dog she led by a ribbon. "But no—it's impossible! How could that be?"

"Why, only in one way, madame, and that common enough. Those children are descended from the illegitimate son of one of the Valois princes, very probably Henri the Second. There is a great deal of good blood scattered about the country in that way, if people did but know it."

Madame dropped the conversation. As a woman of birth it displeased her to think that any privilege of hers was shared even illegitimately by the daughters of an Auteuil peasant, but she remembered later.

To Jeanne Valois, for their neighbors never conceded the aristocratic *de*, her life was a problem which the Valois descent might help to solve. It might mean a better marriage than with a peasant, better food and lodging than those which fell to her daily share, and growing older she spread her little lures, so poorly aided and abetted, and hoped for the best. They caught Madame de Boulainvilliers, who had a curiosity about the little Valois and her dark, sparkling face, and she took the girl into her service and promised to set her forth in life.

Easier said than done for a penniless coquette. Marriage? Men grew shyer every day of pretty, adroit young women who held off for a wedding-ring—a girl much about Madame de Boulainvilliers, who might have allowed her to pick up ambitious ideas. They were certainly too ambitious for the career of a milliner, which was what madame's bounty proposed, and Jeanne married a private in the body-guard of the King's brother, the Comte de Provence, and was promoted from dependence to a poor enough little furnished house at Versailles which went by the name of *La Belle Image*. And then madame died and hope with her and they had the world before them with an empty purse and extremely ambitious ideas to back it.

But she was the richer for madame. She had discarded the language of the people and could talk like a lady. She could trick herself out with madame's talk of the court and great ladies as she had done with her cast-off silks. She knew enough now to know what the goal was at which she would aim if she could. And if anyone thought that the lady of *La Belle Image* would settle down into domestic life and mend her private's hose and cook his stews, that person was grossly deceived. She could not tell where her star would lead her, but somewhere it must, and with progress in view she took her measures and



"We'll save twenty miles by going this way."  
"I know, but if the road is all like this—"  
"My dear, with these Kelly-Springfield Flexible tires you'll never know you're on a rough road."



made her way with her lotions and washes into such boudoirs as she could attain. They were not very aristocratic ones, but that would come.

And first her name. She set her little quick lips resolutely and had cards printed describing her as the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois. Why not? In that land of many titles it might pass, and neither she nor her husband would be the worse for a high-sounding name. It frightened him a little—the arrow was aimed too high for his Countship, but his wits were no match for hers and he agreed.

Then, slowly advancing from that base, Jeanne had it represented to the Comtesse de Provence, a friend of her late benefactress, that the wife of a private in her husband's body-guard was a descendant of the ancient blood royal condemned to vegetate on a private's pay at Versailles where once all doors would have flown open at the mere sound of the royal name. Madame de Boulainvilliers had had pity—why not the Comtesse de Provence?

True, true—and at the well-stated pathetic story Madame de Provence's heart was so far moved that she secured a public pension—which did not cost her charity anything—for the fallen Valois. Fifteen hundred francs. Better than nothing but useless for living purposes. Jeanne would have liked the great lady's countenance better, but that she could not get. The Princess was too much occupied with her amusements to trouble herself about a Valois who could make no return. She forgot the Valois until a much later day when she was compelled indeed to remember, and Jeanne had to begin again.

What she wanted was a clientele of really great ladies, the sort who would have much in their power, and she might as well have wished for the moon. She had fixed her mind on the career of a priestess of beauty from the first, but not to waiting-women and hangers-on like herself. But what to do with herself and her little pots and bottles—her poor stock in trade? It came more prominently into her scheme of things in this necessity that she had other weapons also—a pretty face, a glib tongue, a surface of refinement which covered just the *laissez-aller* that men, especially men of a certain age, appreciate.

Flirtations. And of the sort that leave a residue of money as well as experience behind them. She acquired a little money and much experience, and recalling a youthful curtsy or two to the Cardinal de Rohan at the house of madame, made herself known to him.

It was a high and extremely august friendship, that with his Eminence, and it gave her a footing in his house, the famous Hôtel de Rohan, which was to have consequences indeed.

On the very evening of Boehmer's agony she was seated in the comfortable apartment of an intimate friend, wife of the Superintendent of the Cardinal's household, waiting the arrival of his Eminence in pursuance of an appointment made some days since. There was no jealousy on the part of Madame the Superintendent, for the flirtation had now more or less given way to a position of general usefulness in any little matters which might happen to interest the Cardinal at the moment, and Jeanne always found it worth while to be amusing to anyone, man or woman, who came in her way. A lady who according to her own story had the entrée to all the most distinguished boudoirs in Paris and Versailles could hardly fail to be good company.

"I can never fail in gratitude to Monseigneur," said the Countess demurely, "but like all his friends, like yourself, madame, I lament that his means are not equal to his generosity. However, let us hope that some day there may be a return of the court favor so unjustly withdrawn and we may all then share in his good fortune."

The elderly lady threw her eyes up to heaven. "Ah, madam—the friend who could achieve that for him! It is a frightful thing that a de Rohan should be left in the cold while the mushrooms of yesterday are warmed in the

royal sunshine. And the pickings they get! Office given away to those who have no more claim of birth and blood than street scavengers. Monseigneur should be Master of the King's Household. That is the position for a prince like himself."

"Terribly true indeed," sighed Jeanne. "But his enemies, madam! You can have no conception of the abuse I hear from those who should know better! But where are we to look for truth?"

"And for what is Monseigneur condemned? For a little gaiety which is perfectly natural in his position. Are things bettering, madame? What do you hear at Versailles?"

For the Comtesse Jeanne, whose intimacies consisted in extracting all possible information from her intimates and giving little in return, had possessed Madame the Superintendent, like all the rest of the world, with the belief that she was in the confidence of persons of the highest influence in the royal entourage, too great in fact to be mentioned by name, while their utterances must be guarded like grains of pearl. And so artfully was all this insinuated and substantiated that never a soul doubted the stories of the Arabian Nights with which she regaled them.

"Why, as to that, madam," she said with her own mysterious air which yet conveyed so much, "I have heard things both at Versailles and Marly which lead me to suppose that the tide is turning, and that if his Eminence has the courage to take advantage of it—"

A shrewd nod completed the sentence, as the rattle of the Cardinal's wheels was heard in the courtyard outside. She was on her feet in a moment.

"I have a most interesting bit of information about that, for you and you only!" she whispered, kissing her finger-tips as she whisked out of the door to catch the Cardinal's valet and make her way by the back stairs to the rooms where his Eminence laid aside the purple and took his ease.

Behold the pair in conference half an hour later—Prince Louis de Rohan large, fleshy, imposing in his great chair, his legs stretched out before him, and the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois—whose title caused him huge amusement—perched on the velvet settee. She had always the effect of perching, of alighting for a moment like a bright quick bird to pick up her worm or crumb and flashing off again into the unknown.

"No, no, it is hopeless!" he said with the moody down-turn of the lips which that subject always brought with it.

"But again, no, Highness"—she always called him Highness and he preferred it to the "Eminence" which would have had its absurdities as spoken between them. "I assure you the tide is changing, is changed, and the Queen regrets the coldness of the past years. It is no news to you that she has an eye for a handsome man, and who can wonder when they look at the King! Whitworth, Dorset, de Fersen—" She began ticking off the names on her finger, until some dregs of manhood left in Louis de Rohan stopped her sharply.

"Silence. I forbid you to speak of her Majesty in that way. Pass on to what else you wished to say."

She stared at him in sheer amazement, stammered, regained self-command with the quick assurance of the adventuress, and went on.

"I know, Highness, on the very highest and best authority that the time is ripe for you to regain the Queen's favor, and it follows that if once you let it slip it will never return. Strike now—and success is yours!"

"Yes, but how—how? I care nothing for these glittering generalities. Be precise, my friend. Condescend on details and tell me how, and you will never find me wanting. But first of all a detail on my side. I who have known you flitting about the boudoirs of Versailles find it a little difficult to believe that you have any access to those who can tell you the thoughts of the Queen."

She leaned forward with a silvery peal of laughter and touched his cheek playfully with her finger. "Foolish Highness! Are all men as innocent as that? Don't you know that in the boudoirs far more of truth can be learned than in the King's council-chamber, and especially of the Queen's mind? She does not spread it out before statesmen, but she shares it with her Princess de Lamballe and the Duchess de Polignac and—and"—she smiled like a tantalizing fairy—"your humble servant holds the key!"

He stared at her, incredulous. And yet who could decipher the ways of women? He knew that those she had mentioned would certainly know the mind of the Queen, if any. And everyone would admit that if a little adventuress could gain access to these boudoirs of these very great ladies and to their confidence, she might also gain access to the Queen's thoughts. But still he stared at her incredulously. If it were so, if it were conceivable, he must certainly revise the carelessness with which he was accustomed to treat the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois!

She looked at him with gentle dignity. "How well I comprehend your doubt! The misfortunes of my life have been so crushing that any friend of mine may be pardoned the doubt whether I can ever rise again. And yet for me, poor, trampled, forgotten me, the tide has turned at last, and I have felt the first rays of the Queen's favor. She has heard of me through the ladies I have mentioned and was pleased to pity the blood of Valois fallen to such misery. I shall not long seek the boudoirs of others, Highness. It is they who will seek mine! I have been honored with more than one audience with the Queen."

She threw up her head gallantly and for the moment was a Valois indeed. The Cardinal stared at her stupefied. Her proud look softened.

"But so well can I understand the uncertainty of my friend that I am content to submit my truthfulness to a test. Go to Count Cagliostro—that most marvelous seer and prophet. You believe in him as passionately and profoundly as I. Ask him to look within his wonderful crystal and see what my occupations have been and will be. By that I am content to stand or fall. Do you accept the test?"

There was no question as to what the Cardinal's answer would be. Cagliostro had come to Paris on his invitation and the French nobility had run wild after his signs and wonders. His predictions, horoscopes, prophecies flew from lip to lip, and it would have been a bold man or woman who would have ventured to cast a doubt upon the reality of his inspirations. It was freely rumored that the Queen herself would have consulted him if she had dared, and that her two sisters-in-law had already done so. As to the Cardinal—he was Cagliostro's slave. There was much talk of alchemy between them, of retrieving the clipped fortunes of the House of Rohan by the transmutation of the baser metals into gold, and such singular results had already been achieved that the Prince of the Church was ready to take the word of the Prince of the World Magical for the rest.

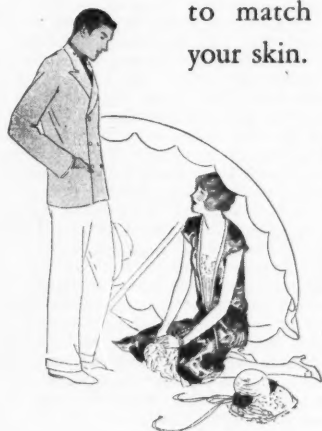
The conversation had now taken a turn of the deepest interest for the Cardinal. He sat up gravely in his chair and regarded her with new respect.

"My friend, it is casting no doubt on your veracity, which I never have had reason to doubt, if I say that the opinion of Count Cagliostro would be of the utmost value to me at this crisis, for it will amaze you to hear that he has already predicted that this year, this very month, a great and startling change occurs in my fortunes, owing to the aspects of the ruling planets. I did not pay the heed to this that I ought, for I could see no betterment in the affair that most concerns me. But if you are right—"

She clapped her little hands and laughed until the room rang again. "Joy, joy! Judge if I am proud to be the servant of the mysteries

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### for selecting your shade of Pompeian Beauty Powder

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**Olive Skin:** Women with this type of skin are apt to have dark hair and eyes. This skin should use the *Rachel* shade to match its rich tones.

**Pink Skin:** This is the youthful, rose-tinted skin (not the florid skin) and should use the *Flesh* shade.

**White Skin:** This skin is unusual, but if you have it you should use *White* powder in the daytime.

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Specialiste en Beauté

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of the prophet! For it is my doing—mine—that he foresaw. Let us go to him tomorrow and he shall look in the crystal for us and that may be an assistance to me to see exactly how I should train my batteries. I pray you to do this. Then we shall walk in clear certainty instead of in doubt. That man *cannot* err!"

The Cardinal agreed eagerly. That was his opinion in common with the opinion of all Paris. Cagliostro had caught the public by its love of the marvelous, dazed, bewitched, bedazzled it until every word that fell from his lips was Gospel where the old Gospel had no longer power to compel belief, and as such the Cardinal received it.

She could not have made a proposal better calculated to win the Cardinal—a fact which she may have grasped as well as another.

He summoned his confidential man and dispatched a message to Cagliostro fixing the following evening. The man lingered a second on the threshold.

"Monseigneur, there is a gentleman who entertains an audience of you. He will not delay you more than ten minutes if you will have the goodness to accord it. It is Monsieur Boehmer, the King's Jeweler."

The negative was cut short on de Rohan's lips by the name, and the look of sharp interest that sparkled in the face of the Lamotte.

"Why, I saw him at Versailles today!" she said under her breath. "He had been with the Queen about the diamond necklace. Permit him to come up, Highness. It may be of the utmost consequence to us."

"But how did you know what his business was with the Queen? Yes—show him up." The Cardinal too was tense with excitement.

"Ah, Monseigneur—that is my secret—a part of the secret we were just discussing. And I say this to you very seriously—even if he has come on other business, lead him to that, find out what happened and let me know. It may be of inestimable value to your interests. See—I will hide in here. Perhaps I had better listen. You agree?"

He agreed with a nod, pleased at her candor. She opened a door she knew very well, and with one of her birdlike movements flashed through it and was gone. A vague scent of lilac and a little ruffle in the air was all that testified to the late presence of a woman in the room when Boehmer was shown in, and that he was not likely to notice.

His grief-stricken aspect pierced through even the Cardinal's selfishness.

"You are ill, Boehmer. Have you had bad news? Be seated."

"Monseigneur, let me not trouble you with my affairs. I have come about the black pearls you had the goodness to order, and to take your commands about the setting. Here they are."

From a little box he extracted three exquisitely matched black pearls and laid them on the table—but with an expression as absent as if the thing meant nothing to him. The Cardinal looked at the man instead of the pearls.

"No doubt they are beautiful—and if we agree about the price— But you were never extortionate with me. Be candid with me. Has anything gone wrong? Is there anything in which I can serve you? What is on your mind? I fear you are ill."

The man made a poor attempt at a smile which almost ended in a sob. "The black pearls, Eminence. I was about to say you shall have them set in small diamonds and all complete at the same price as the ring of white pearls you ordered last month. And if that meets your approval I will withdraw."

"It suits me well. But it does not suit me that an old and faithful servant should withhold his confidence in a matter in which I might possibly aid him."

The look and words were kindly. They were the first words of sympathy which had met the

miserable Boehmer, for Bassange on receiving his news had unleashed himself in a passion of anger and terror of which the less said the better. Breaking down utterly, he hid his face on crossed arms on the table and wept—a nerve storm of long pent-up and violently released misery.

The Cardinal rose with his heavy gait—more than a hint of gout in it—and opened the wing-door of a richly carved cabinet. He extracted a bottle and two twisted Venetian glasses of purple misted with gold, brimmed them with Imperial Tokay from the Empress's own cellars in Vienna, and raising the glass with relish to his own lips commanded Boehmer to do the same.

"I waited on you myself, for I would not permit another to see your distress," he said. "Drink, calm yourself and give me your confidence."

The natural result followed. The rich wine ran like hope and life through the poor man's veins and the condescending kindness warmed them. He poured out the whole story, giving every word, every gesture to the life, but naturally as seen through his own hopes and prepossessions.

"Her Majesty longed for the diamonds, Monseigneur—longed for them with all her heart and soul. What woman could do otherwise? What passed between herself and the King I cannot tell, but I am convinced that it was only her high sense of duty that stood in the way, and that if any way could be found— Oh, if it could but be found!"

"You think she would take them?" the Cardinal asked in a muse. Every word Boehmer uttered bore the stamp of truth upon it. It gave him much to consider.

"I think, Monseigneur? I know. I have revolved every expedient. As I suggested to the Queen—let her take the necklace and pay by any instalments that please her. She need not appear in the jewels immediately, of course. She appeared to resent that suggestion, but why? I cannot see. Possibly she feared to displease his Majesty. But as for me I am in such desperate straits that anything which would relieve me of the diamonds would be salvation. If I had her Majesty's signed agreement—but why do I talk? It is hopeless. I must go, but with the undying memory of your condescension."

It was long before he went. There was much to say and hear, and the time did not seem long to the greedy listener in the next room to whom it opened vistas of hope and wealth.

She crept in noiselessly when the door was safely shut upon Boehmer, and knelt before the Cardinal, looking up, her dark, intelligent face subdued into seriousness.

"I heard all he said, Highness. I knew you wished me to. And now I will tell you what I heard at Versailles today—I dared not before. It was this. The Queen longs with all her heart and soul and strength for the jewels. She will give anything to the man who will procure them for her. Nothing will be withheld. I have her ear, Highness—catch Fortune as she flies! Be that happy man and the world, and more, much more is yours!"

She drew herself up by the arm of the chair, writhing upward like a snake until her mouth touched his ear, and whispered, drawing a little back now and then to note the look of joy, hope, confidence which passed across his face.

Finally he flung his arms about her and kissed her cheek, then stood up, stretching his arms above his head with a gesture of enormous relief. "Tomorrow we will go to Cagliostro!" he said.

"But be guarded even with him!" cried Jeanne. "Say nothing to him of the private things I have told you—of her lack of money, her desire for the diamonds, her eagerness for money to give in her charities. Remember, for God's sake, remember we have the reputation of the Queen in our hands!"

*The Cardinal is putty in the hands of that adroit little lady, the Countess—and Next Month you will see her pursue her intrigue with results destined to make a throne totter*



## The Great Gamble

(Continued from page 87)

in the saving of Russ's life in this crisis. But with the passing of acute danger a great tension also passed from the household; Gail could breathe again, could laugh shakily at the telephone, could discuss chicken jelly and floating island with Toy Wing, and write long grateful outpourings to Callie, back in boarding-school.

"He's going to get well—he's going to get well—he's going to get well!" sang Gail's heart, in the first miraculous days of comparative security. And she saw that Miss Elliott and Miss Klingsberg had the most delicious meals, the most comfortable rooms and the most sacred independence that two women ever enjoyed.

"She's quite wonderful, for such a little thing!" Gail told her mother, of the night-nurse.

"She's quite beautiful!" Mrs. Ransom returned, with faint significance.

Gail slightly widened her eyes, looked up.

"Yes, I suppose she is," she agreed slowly.

"Does Russ like her?"

"Oh, he adores her—he adores them both!" Gail said. But immediately she felt the unaccustomed blood in her cool cheeks, and wished—for reasons undefined—that she had not said it, or that she had not thought it.

That same evening she slipped into the sick-room at about seven. It was exquisitely orderly; beyond the opened door there was a strip of blue evening sky, powdered with early stars, above the quietly breathing sea. A low light was lighted, and in its glow shone the liquid, shimmering gold of Ingeborg's hair, brighter than ever against the gauze cap. Russ's bed was straight and smooth and immaculately white; in a corner of the room, neatly turned down, was the couch bed of the night-nurse.

Ingeborg looked up as Gail came in, not hostile, not even inhospitable, but alert. Her noiseless arising, her silent smiling indication of a chair near the bed were sufficient warning. Gail had made no sound, and was careful to make none, but Russ opened his hollowed eyes for an instant, and his face faintly brightened with welcome.

Ingeborg had certainly been reading to him, but when Gail reached for the open book, the nurse shook her head.

"Weren't you reading?" the wife breathed.

"Just"—it was almost "yust," the girl had a charming hint of a Swedish lisp—"just a few words," she murmured.

"She speaks Russian!" Russ whispered, without opening his eyes. Since the Russian commission had been a settled thing, he had been studying the language.

"Keep still," Ingeborg said, straightening a sheet hem, bending close above him. The invalid gave her a glance, shut his tired eyes again.

Gail felt suddenly nettled; she felt as if wifely common sense must somehow reduce this queer atmosphere to normal. The girl's beauty, her youth, her opened bed—in Russ's room!

"Shall I read, dear?" she said. She read well.

"Would you like to hear Callie's letter? She is beginning to write such amusing—"

Gail was speaking in the lowest, the gentlest of tones. But the nurse gave her an alarmed glance, and touched her babyish little white forefinger to her lip. Gail fell silent, affronted; she was almost angry when she saw tears begin to slip down Russ's thin cheeks. What on earth had she done?

He lay still, and she made no further sound. The quiet minutes passed, and Ingeborg went silently out, silently returned with a glass of milk and a glass tube, silently superintended his slow and languid consuming of it. Russ did not open his eyes.

The nurse moved noiselessly, efficiently about the room. The patient had apparently dropped into a light, restless sleep.

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"I am going to give him his rub and settle him off for the night," Ingeborg presently breathed. "I think perhaps it would be better—" She left the sentence smilingly in air; a faint movement of the golden head indicated the door.

"You think it distresses him to see me here?" Gail asked, her throat dry.

"Well—anything—" the little nurse offered pleadingly.

Russ opened his eyes, looked wearily, fretfully, at his wife. "Later, Gail?" he whispered. He wanted her to go away.

Gail looked at the other woman, and Ingeborg smiled apologetically. It was as if she invited Gail to share her indulgence of the whims of a sick child.

But Gail could not smile. She went out dazedly, walked up and down the patio outside Russ's bedroom windows for a long hour, bewildered, humiliated, puzzled.

She was a simple woman; there were no smallnesses, no pettinesses about her. Her husband—her clever, gentle genius of a husband, handsome and courted in these days of his success—was hers, as her children were hers. Fight for them, compete for them? She did not know how to begin. They—*they* were hers. She had suffered and struggled and planned and worked for their good. In all the demands of their lives she had been adequate.

Now, when Russ was creeping back from the valley of the shadow, when he was struggling through the hardest days of his hard life, a beautiful little strange woman of twenty-four had sweetly yet firmly ejected her from his room.

She was in there with him, exquisite little Ingeborg Klingsberg, whose name they had not known three weeks ago. She was murmuring, smiling above his helpless frame, administering to him, making him comfortable. His weary eyes would smile their good night to Ingeborg tonight.

Meanwhile Gail was dismissed, free to walk up and down the terrace. Her lonely promenade was none the sweeter because presently she heard from the sick-room a gruff, brief sound that was something like Russ's old laugh, and distinguished the sweet, faint, golden laughter of Ingeborg in reply.

What were they talking about? What were they laughing about? Gail, actuated by an emotion violent and painful, one that she had never known before, went close to one of the opened doors that gave upon the terrace and looked into the room.

Russ lay silent, peaceful, with shut eyes. Ingeborg, seated close beside his bed, her bright head bent, the fingers of her free hand on his wrist, was softly reading. Once he opened his eyes and gave his nurse a look, a long, affectionate, grateful, exhausted glance for which Gail would have given a year of her life.

He slept well that night, Miss Elliott reported at breakfast. But Gail did not sleep at all. With a touch of grim determination in her quiet gray eyes, she carried him in his milk that evening at seven o'clock, just before Miss Klingsberg was to come on duty.

The day-nurse, to be sure, did not encourage Gail's visits. This was bearable, because Miss Elliott herself spared him even the effort of smiling. She did not speak to him as she went about, she did not even look at him.

With her own bony hands she hung a great sign, "Silence," on his door. He needed every ounce of his precious energy; Ellen Elliott was not the woman to waste it.

Gail liked her attitude, liked the woman herself. This was what one expected from a nurse—efficiency, impersonal service, conscientious attention to duty. Not black eyes misted with pale gold hair, dimples, little phrases in Russian, little bursts of happy laughter. Gail began to wonder how long he would need a night-nurse.

She carried in his milk at seven to try herself in that capacity. But Russ—after his first languid smile—wouldn't drink it at all. It was too hot at first; the attitude into which

Gail's arm propped him wasn't right; and then—he just didn't want it. His wife let him drop back on the pillow and sat watching him, feeling vaguely worried.

"Tired, dearest?"

"Weak," he whispered, with shut eyes.

"I know." She did not dare offer to read again. There was a long silence.

Then Ingeborg came in, in fresh and crisp white, and knelt to grope with experienced fingers for the hot-water bottle at Russ's feet. When she replaced it, newly filled, he gave a murmur of content and opened his eyes.

"Pillows?" he breathed. She was instantly busy with them; Russ sighed in relief. She went to the window, adjusted a shade, and he murmured, "Oh, thank you!"

Gail at least had the self-control and simple common sense not to defend herself, not to say, "Oh, darling, I could have done all that!" But her spirit burned within her. She was not an utter fool, but she felt herself one under these circumstances.

He was so adorable, with his sunken eyes and three-days' beard, with his thin, hairy wrists and the new gray at his temples—her man, whose children she had borne, whose meals she had cooked, whose socks and collars she had packed in a thousand trunks. Upon a sudden impulse, she sank to her knees beside his bed and kissed the bony fingers, and he opened anxious eyes.

"Pretty sick, petty?" he faltered, in tears.

Ingeborg, returning with a glass of milk, gave Gail a terrified glance aside, even while she murmured hearteningly to her charge. Sick? Who ever heard of a sick man drinking a quart of milk a day—that didn't sound much like sickness!

Gail could only look on, dumb and superfluous, as Russ weakly and obediently drank the milk, his patient eyes drinking encouragement from his capable little nurse at the same time. Ingeborg sat on the bed, close to his pillow, one arm about him, the other holding glass and tube to his lips.

"You think I'm better?" Russ interrupted his collation to ask her, unashamed, pitiful.

"You're much better! Doctor Benson isn't even coming in tomorrow—what do you expect? You were very sick, you know," Ingeborg crooned, glancing at Gail warningly. "We must encourage him!" said her reproachful eyes.

"You can see Sonny in a day or two, Doctor Benson says," Gail offered hearteningly. But he turned his head against his nurse's arm childishly.

"Too noisy!" he whispered, shaken again.

Later that evening Ingeborg told Gail, with great tact, that perhaps it would be better not to try to make Mr. Somers talk at all. He was still too weak for any effort; it distressed him to try to think. There really should be no one—*no one*—in the sick-room; all the doctors had been most definite about that! Next week they expected a great improvement—they were even talking about getting him off with his wife for a long sea trip—but just now they could not be too careful.

There was more of it, reinforced by the hearty approval of Miss Elliott.

"If you ask me, I wouldn't go in there at all, Mrs. Somers. He gets thinking about the children, and money matters—he really isn't up to it yet. In a few days he'll begin to ask for you and the baby."

"He doesn't want me," Gail thought heavily. "He doesn't want me. Russ—Russ doesn't want me!"

Well, it was only for a few weeks—he really was getting better. Trained nurses were like doctors, architects, plumbers, needed for a brief time, that was all.

But the next day she spoke to the doctors about reducing him to one nurse.

"Yes, any time now," old Doctor Rogers said approvingly. "In the first place, we want to buck him up for his sea trip. And then he's got to begin to get on his own feet."

"Hard for you, Gail," Doctor Petrie, who had known her all her life, said with a glance.

"Oh, I shall love it!" she answered animatedly. "Miss Elliott and I can manage everything now very easily."

"Miss Klingsberg will stay—Miss Elliott's got to get back to the hospital," Doctor Benson contributed, in a perfectly matter-of-fact tone. "As a matter of fact Miss Klingsberg's personality seems to appeal to him more than the other's—he likes her. She's an excellent nurse."

That was the way doctors decided things; the preferences of the family, of the patient's wife, simply weren't taken into consideration. Gail was conscious that long-dormant forces, forces that belonged to the days of cave homes, dresses of skins and wild fights in primitive forests, were awakening within her.

Outwardly she was an intelligent, keen, aristocratically plain woman of almost forty, mistress of a beautiful hacienda, dressed in cool brown linen and a broad, popped hat, and on this warm summer morning concerned only for her husband's health. Inwardly she was a raging savage, shouting to herself, "She shan't have him—she shan't have him—she shan't have him!"

"Now about the steamers," one of the doctors was saying. "You could sail on the fifth—that's a week from today—or on the eleventh. I've reserved you rooms on both—a big room for Russ, where his nurse can have a cot, a room adjoining for you, and a sort of sitting-room with a deck where he can have his meals when he feels better. If he can, he ought to get off at once—he'll begin to mend the minute he gets to sea."

"Doctor," Gail began, "you think he positively must have a nurse?"

"Oh, yes, by all means!" the old specialist said, raising surprised eyebrows. "He's been an extremely sick man, you know. His pulse and temperature must be watched, and anything like shock or collapse might be fatal to him. And the diet and alcohol rubs are very important. He's going to get well, but he's not out of the woods yet."

"Things have to be done for him," she asked, with her fine brows drawn in a faint, concentrated frown, "that anyone—that I, for instance, couldn't do?"

"My dear Gail, you're not a nurse! This woman has had three years of intensive training, remember!"

"She doesn't seem to do anything for him that I couldn't do," Gail persisted, smiling, but with a horrible inclination toward tears.

"Ah, but she does. It's most fortunate for us that he likes her. She doesn't want to go, I know that. Her sister in Portland is going to have a child, and she had promised to take care of her—it's too bad. But she was extremely reasonable about it. I explained that we can't change nurses now, and that Miss Elliott has just been staying on from week to week as a matter of kindness—really—"

Two scarlet spots were burning in Gail's usually pale cheeks, although her manner was as composed and quiet as ever.

That evening she had a few words alone with the invalid. She crept in at about sunset to ask tenderly if he would like her to read.

His head shook a faint negative. Would he like her to talk? Not now. Not about Callie and Sonny? Not now.

He opened his eyes restlessly; they searched the room. The clock stood at two minutes past seven. "Late," he whispered.

"Miss Klingsberg? But if there's something you want, do let me do it, dearest."

He did not open his eyes; he gave no sign. After a while he said faintly, "She's wonderful, isn't she?"

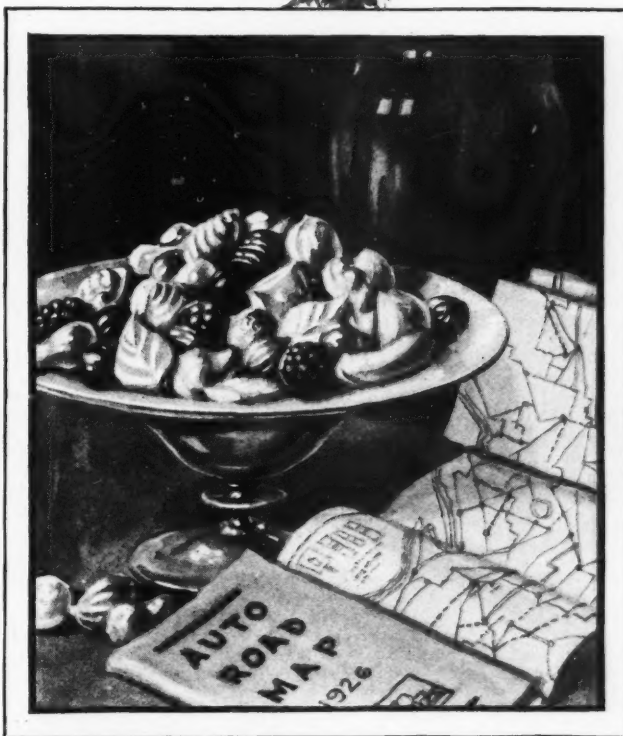
"Miss Klingsberg? Indeed she is! She's been a wonderful little nurse to you!" Gail said lightly but warmly.

A silence. Russ's darkened eyes were shut; his wife held his cool, thin hand in both her warm, firm ones.

"I've asked her—" he began, and stopped. "I've asked her to go to Russia with us," Russ whispered. Gail's heart stood still. "We

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can use her in lots of ways—companion, secretary, that sort of thing—or if one of the kids got ill," Russ, who had opened his eyes only to give his wife one dreamy glance, murmured in a satisfied tone.

"And she'll go?"

"Oh, she'll go," the invalid whispered. "I don't think she knows quite what's happened to her!" he added, in tender amusement.

This to his wife. This to his wife. The boy's pride in his first affair!

"It's one of the nice things about you, Gail, that you're so darned decent about anything like this!" Russ said. "You understand—" he began, looking at her a little anxiously. "But of course you understand!" he breathed.

She sat beside him, gently patting his hand, smitten silent. Understand what? Decent about what?

"You always come first, Gail," Russ whispered, with his exquisite, considerate smile. "And whatever you say—goes."

Gail smiled back. She did not speak.

A minute or two later the night-nurse came in—crisp in snowy duck, dewy, exquisite, concerned. She smiled at Russ, came to put a bit of ice into his parched mouth, lifted the coverlid and lightened his bedding, slipped a handkerchief moistened with fresh, clean-smelling toilet-water into his fingers. Again the pillows were shaken, the light adjusted; it was Gail's misfortune that as she moved her chair back to permit of these ministrations she jarred the whole bed, and saw a look of acute anxiety cloud Ingeborg's dark-lashed eyes. Russ faintly moaned.

"Go play me some Chopin, Gail!" he said presently.

Gail wondered if he wanted to get rid of her; her suspicions were confirmed when, in the middle of the second waltz, Miss Klingsberg came sweetly out to say that the music was making the invalid nervous.

"We have to spoil him," pleaded the little nurse. "He is all nerves just now."

"Spoil him!" Gail said to herself, in indignant pain, over her lonely dinner. "That's absolute nonsense! This goes deeper than spoiling!"

Ingeborg had to fix his trays or somehow they were not right. Ingeborg had to decide what he would need on the sea trip. His words were all with, or of, Ingeborg. He was like a child whose mother deserts him when Ingeborg departed for a brief good-by visit to her sister in Portland. Miss Elliott graciously returned for these three days and proved entirely satisfactory, but the patient drooped, and Gail saw it—had to admit it. It was not only that he lost weight and color and sleep—he seemed suddenly to lack what was more precious than all, his recently regained interest in life. No-body could manage his milk, his medicines, his pillows, his lights—no matter. It was all right, it was not important. Let it go!

The sailing hour was eleven, but two full hours earlier Gail had him established on board, safe in the specially sheltered little angle of the deck that was to be theirs without intrusion for the entire trip. The day was a rare one for the Western coast city, soft and warm, and Russ stood the motor run from Pebble Beach well, and looked about him, from his deck chair and heaped plaids and cushions, with something of the real traveler's enthusiasm.

"Have you seen her?" he began to ask his wife at regular intervals of half a minute, when he had had soup and a baked custard at half past ten.

"Ingeborg? No, and I've been at the rail watching, too," Gail answered. "But there are crowds of people coming on—I might have missed her."

"Wouldn't she come straight to find us?"

"The whole thing's so odd," Gail flattened a much-folded telegram, handed it to him with an eloquent shrug.

"Will join you on steamer," Russ read, for the tenth time. "H'm!" he muttered. "What do you suppose she means by that? She was to have come back yesterday."

"Perhaps her sister's had her baby."

He glowered at the yellow slip, crumpled it and flung it overboard. "I should think she might have said so," he said in dissatisfaction. "You wouldn't start without her?"

Gail considered. "I don't think we should."

"No, and I don't think we should!" he said.

"You could get that husky who helped me on board to get us off?"

"Surely. But the rumor is now that we're going to be an hour late starting," Gail responded placidly.

The confusion of sailing day was in full flower now; only echoes of it reached Russ's placid corner, but he could see the hatches being closed over the baggage and the first-class gang-plank drawn up.

"You might take another look for her, Gail—she *must* be on board!"

"Oh, she must be!" Gail, stunning in her belted coat and soft small hat, flitted away.

Her heart hammering with strange fright and nervousness, she threaded the familiar scene. Passengers already writing post-cards, shore visitors reluctantly moving down the gang-plank. The gongs were drummed.

No Ingeborg. No Ingeborg. No taffy-yellow hair and brown coat. Gail loitered here and there; she did not go back to Russ until the big ship had actually swung away from the pier, until they were moving past North Beach, past Alcatraz, toward the Golden Gate.

"Is she here?" she meant to ask, in a natural, anxious voice as she rejoined him. But when she got back there was no occasion for words. Russ had fainted; he had tried to get up, the ship's nurse, a rosy, buxom creature, explained sympathetically, had tried to leave the ship because his own nurse had not come, and he had fainted. Gail, as white as he, helped them to get him to bed, to apply restoratives.

"He has no pulse at all," said the ship's nurse to the stewardess. "Run for Doctor McCarthy. I guess he's pretty sick. And she looked like death herself," thought Miss Lappy, and sighed. Two cases—and they were not yet out of the bay!

However, his wife insisted upon taking all the care of poor Mr. Somers, and after all he did not need a great deal of care. In a few days he was out on the deck again, and under the tender administrations of his wife—and how wonderfully devoted she was!—he was well, actually well, in no time.

The salty warm breezes blew over him, he slept well, his food tasted delicious, he began to pace the deck a little—one day he played bridge.

The brilliant, interesting woman never left his side; the other women on board told her that she utterly spoiled him—he couldn't do one thing without her. Mrs. Somers received this reproach with a mysterious smile.

"I hope so!" she would say contentedly. She was a stunning creature, the other women conceded, if not exactly handsome. Her voice, her eyes, the way she wore her white flannels, her striped blazers, her simple evening wear were all expressive of an unusually forceful personality.

"And how that man adores her!" they said.

But she did not risk telling him the truth for many months, for all that. They were in London for Christmas holidays when Gail, speaking of the wedding-present she had just sent Mrs. Karl Knudsen, recently Ingeborg Klingsberg, asked Russ if he ever thought of his pretty nurse.

"I was crazy about her," Russ, busy with the toy airplane he was setting up for his son, answered with something between a frown and a grin. "I talked some awful rubbish to you about her, I remember that. Sickiness, you know—weakness—I had an awful crush on that little Swede!"

"You never knew that I sent her a wire that the steamer was not going to sail until two days after she *did* sail, Russ?"

He looked at her bewilderedly. "You did? What for?"

"Well, because I wanted to take care of you myself."

A pause. Russ looked dazedly at the little

pine and paper wings in his fingers, looked back to Gail's somewhat reddened face again.

"But—what'd you sign the telegram?"

"Pacific Mail Steamship Company."

"Ye gods!" Russ commented, and was still.

"But why the deuce didn't you fire her if you didn't like her?" he demanded after a space.

"Russ, dearest, remember what you thought of her. And they all said you had to have a nurse!"

Another pause. Then a concerned look came into the man's keen eyes, and he said, in a slightly startled tone: "But look here, petty, look here—that was some risk you ran! Suppose I'd died on your hands. You know I might have."

"Well, I took that risk," Gail said calmly. "I've risked my life for you more than once. I've spent months looking right down into the blackness—for you. All those months you were expecting Sonny, I was expecting—death. All that terrible trip up to El Paso fifteen years ago was a *via crucis* for me. Big men like you, Russ, geniuses—are just the sort who fall in love with fluffy-headed little trained nurses! I preferred—the other risk."

He laughed, somewhat amused, somewhat resentful. "Rather have me dead, eh?"

"Yes, I think so. Rather dead than involved in wretchedness about Sonny and Callie—about all the old associations and ways."

"I'd have chucked 'em all overboard as easy as that, would I?"

"You might have. Wiser men have. You're terribly—terribly simple in some ways, dearest," Gail said. "You're a big man, and a successful man. I didn't know how steady that little blond head of Ingeborg Klingsberg's was!"

"I've thought of it a thousand times," Russ presently admitted. "And I've thought that she was just mothering me along, that was all, because I'd been so ill."

"Yes, but one never knows just where that sort of mothering will end," Gail submitted, in a dubious voice. "I asked myself," she went on, "what there was about clinic thermometers and hot-water bottles that I couldn't do as well as she. I knew I'd have a few bad days getting you used to the change, and I faced them. After all, it was only by chance that an old squaw was with me when Callie was born—it was only by chance that they got me into an El Paso hospital two years later, in time for the blood transfusions that saved my life!"

"I looked at you, desperately ill, Russ, and I remembered the holidays in Normandy—I remembered the old bookstores here—the Metropolitan Opera House, on the 'Ring' afternoons—our friends, our children, the traditions of our houses, and I—well!" She came close to him, put a hand on his shoulder; Gail was rarely visibly stirred, rarely demonstrative, and he loved to see her so. "After all, our lives, while we live, are together, Russ. If we're to be separated, it must be only because we've risked everything else first!"

He had laid the toy aside; now he looked down at her, a glimmer of moisture on his lashes, his lips smiling a little ashamed.

"Gail—when you've always been, and always will be, the only woman in the world for me, why do you talk about a little yellow-headed nurse? She was perfectly efficient and sweet and all that, but not to be mentioned in the same breath with my wife."

"I thought I was talking about marriage in general terms!" Gail countered, her own eyes unusually bright as she raised her face for his kiss.

"If you weren't an extraordinarily clever woman, and I a half-baked sort of man, I might know something about that," Russ said, in the lover's silly, happy mood of mingled kisses and murmurs and low laughter, his face close to hers, his arms about her shoulders.

"As it is—I know that I love my wife. About marriages in general I don't know a darn thing!"

"Ah," said Gail, on a little ripple of laughter, "but I flatter myself that I do!"

## Once Around the Clock by Owen Wister (Continued from page 45)

for me has, I may say without fear of contradiction, its limits. But I don't have to take any steps about that. What she could teach you is method. It's your method, sir, that's a mistake in this community, if you'll let me be so free."

"Be as free as you like, Colonel."

"Well, sir, when I decided to change medical advisers and come to you about my little old liver that served me so true in my care-free youth—I experienced two shocks, sir. Your office was just a plain room. A couple of chairs, a table or so, a desk—might have been anybody's room. Might have been a dummy room in a furniture-store window. Just that college diploma on your wall. Not a crocodile in sight. No respect for the feelings of this community, sir. Flanagan County demands crocodiles in a doctor's office, and other proofs in plenty of the practitioner's scientific attainment—and you fail to conform to our standards. Next. Did you take care to see the color of my money before you saw the color of my tongue? No, sir, you did not! I got my pulse felt, and my heart listened to, and a thermometer stuck in my mouth and all sorts of things, without paying you a single cent in advance. The Professor wouldn't treat her oldest friend like that."

"Colonel McDee," said the young New Englander, "I wish I could ever be sure when you're joking and when you're not."

"I'm not always sure of that myself—any more. But you're the first Yankee I have ever liked, young man. I know I mean that!"

"Have you met many of us, Colonel?"

"Quite a few, sir, between 'sixty-one and 'sixty-five."

"Oh—I forgot. Well, if you went to Boston now—"

"Boston! I'm a Southerner, sir. My rooftop was burned while I was fighting."

Leonard preserved a moment's silence before he spoke gently. "I was not born then, Colonel. Colonel, a good supper is waiting at Mr. Dade's, and I'll be alone. Will you keep me company?"

"Why, yes, sir, with pleasure."

And as they went along together toward the ranch, Colonel Steptoe McDee looked up at the sky once more. A serene dusk was there, with the high slender clouds barely visible, and in the deepening gray of the light Texas seemed to be expanding its immensity to the edges of the world. Beneath its influence the two men came in silence to the light of the lamp where the table was ready laid; and after a brief salute to each other over whisky and water they sat down to their repast, which Dade's Mexican quietly served. Moths flew in and their fluttering was the chief sound to be heard. At length the guest made an inquiry.

"When he mentioned the Pickwick Hotel, Doctor, don't you think he meant the Dos Bocas saloon?"

"Colonel, I am grateful to whichever institution is depriving me of Mr. Dade's society."

In response to this, a point of light danced for a moment in the Colonel's tragic eyes.

Leonard filled out his remark. "He has gone there every night this week."

Steptoe McDee sat motionless yet alert, like an old family portrait; neat, lean, delicate, dried into his philosophy by changeless mental solitude. Presently he still further filled out Leonard's remark.

"Miss Maria Sanchez—but you'll have met Miss Sanchez?"

"She made my acquaintance and dropped it the same day—the day I came to O'Neil City. I disappointed her expectations."

"Then I perceive that you have thoroughly met the lady—without causing anxiety to either of her gentleman friends!"

The young New Englander flushed. His morals were strict. "No anxiety, Colonel. None to Mr. Dade or Antofito—or anybody anywhere."

For a while the moths fluttered on before the guest spoke.

"Doctor, I notice you don't pack a six-shooter along with you on your goings and comings hereabouts."

"Not one of my habits, Colonel."

"Better acquire it, sir. To travel unheeled in Flanagan County is to be conspicuous."

"I don't know that I object to being conspicuous in so harmless a way."

"To free-born Americans, sir, any way is objectionable. This community is cast in Liberty's giant mold."

"Why, Colonel, you're always conspicuously well-dressed yourself!"

Not at all displeased by this personality, the guest waved a hand. "That may be, sir, that may be! But I'm an old-timer and you're a newcomer."

This made the young New Englander silent. He thought it over. "Yes. I believe I do feel new pretty often here."

"Don't you ever feel—incautious, Doctor?"

Leonard looked perplexed. "Well, not to speak of."

"Take our recent little party at the well," suggested the Colonel. "You did not go very far out of your way to please Professor Salamanca."

"That's an exertion I'm unlikely to make!" exclaimed the youth hotly. "I didn't notice that you went far in that direction yourself!"

The Colonel's dark little eyes remained steadily thoughtful, fixed on the lamp.

"Well, Doctor," he presently remarked, "I have never classified the varieties of jealousy any more than I have classified the varieties of hornet, but I'd rather stir none of them up. Professor Salamanca is no laughing matter. I can jest with that lady, sir—it's my private joy in an existence where joy is scarce; but she jests with none, let me assure you. I cannot impress upon you too earnestly, sir, that Professor Salamanca is a most remarkable woman."

"Let's smoke out on the porch where it's cool," said Leonard, rising.

As they sat with their chairs tilted back against the wall and their boot heels caught on the rungs, the stars were softly clear and the warm sweet odors of the day still pervaded the night.

"When I came here first," said Leonard musingly, "it used to make me think of home all the time."

"Your home? Massachusetts?" There was surprise in the tones of the Colonel.

"Many typical parts of New England. You see, before they get their leaves, the mesquite might be peach-trees; and the live-oaks sometimes stand like apple-trees in an old orchard. When I rode through them I kept expecting a stone wall and a white church over the next rise. But of course it never was there. Nothing ever was there, except more of the same."

"More of the same," echoed Steptoe McDee, very quietly.

"So I've got used to that at last," pursued Leonard, after smoking for a while. "But I wonder how long it will be before my education is finished and I am used to everything."

"A long while, young man; a long, long while."

"Well, I'll try not to neglect my opportunities."

"Don't miss a single one, young man!"

"I count your company as one, Colonel."

"If I can make it so, sir, if I can make it so! You're the first Yank—however, enough of these sentiments. Now when I came to this country I had some prejudices. All are gone but a few pet ones."

"I'm thick with them," declared Leonard.

"Root them up, sir. Burn them. Scatter their ashes to the free air of Flanagan County."

Leonard laughed out in the dark. "Won't you let me spare one or two pet ones?"

"Unhealthy policy! Alien to the principles of a liberty-loving community!"

"Well, now, here's one, for instance, you would hardly advise my parting with, Colonel. What do you suppose Professor Salamanca did last week?"

The red of the Colonel's cigar turned sharply toward where the young doctor sat tilted against the wall.

"She sent her Antofito," Leonard pursued, "with a letter to me. In that letter she proposed that she and I should go into partnership. Professional partnership." And again he laughed out in the dark.

But the guest did not laugh. His cigar turned slowly away again.

"From my observations at the well," said he, "I fear that your reply may not have been tactful."

"I tore up the letter and told Antofito that was my answer."

"Good Lord, Doctor!" Steptoe McDee smoked in silence for some time. "A letter may be unimportant," he finally began in a discursive tone. "Ace Brown got one. It gave him ten days' notice to leave the country."

It was Leonard's glowing cigar that now turned toward the speaker as he proceeded.

"Now notices like that had been coming to a number of citizens in Flanagan County. They were citizens who had been considered as eating too much beef without owning any cattle in the country. Some of them failed to give their letters due attention. Well, sir, in eighteen months, thirty-four recipients were buried in consequence. It was clearly not suicide in a single case. So that when Two-bit Stacey received his notice giving him ten days, he made a very sensible remark. 'Ten days!' he said. 'Well, I'll let them have nine days back.' Two-bit always had good judgment and he left that day. He has never revisited this vicinity. I understand he is still enjoying good health somewhere up North."

"Well, well," said Leonard.

"Now Ace Brown suspected that his notice was not genuine. He decided to stay just as usual. Didn't want to change any plans he had. Of course he took precautions. Wherever he went he packed his six-shooter and a Winchester along with him; rode on high places; avoided thickets; did not go through gates—took fences down instead. Just a panel, you understand. Nippers will do it if you can't lay the posts down. He's here yet. Ace knew it was just somebody's joke. Oh, I got one or two before I had made myself clear to this community. The Professor never got but one. She hadn't been here long, and a fool patient sent it to her, just to have her consult him. She was treating him for dysentery, but she didn't consult him. Nobody in Flanagan County ever believed that he died of dysentery. It was on that occasion," the Colonel concluded thoughtfully, "that I informed Professor Salamanca—through the customary channels—that my death—from any apparent cause whatsoever—would be followed by hers inside twenty-four hours, and that no amount of heavenly bodies and dried alligators would help her."

Leonard tossed away the butt of his cigar. Its spark lay visible a moment in the soft dust. Beyond was the dim presence of the live-oaks. He rose abruptly.

"Come inside, Colonel. I'd like your judgment."

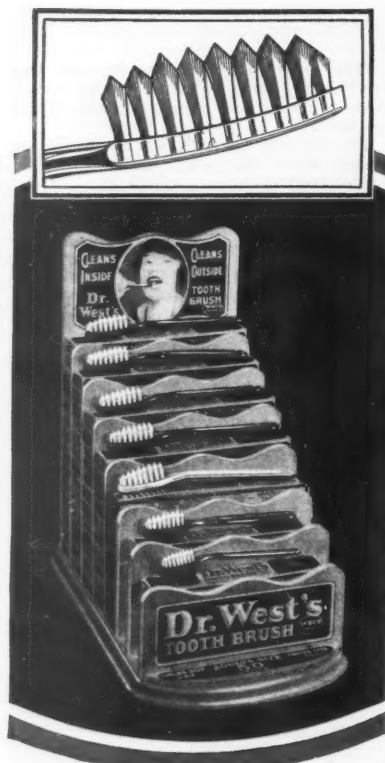
The guest followed the host in where the moths were fluttering. His gray head came but little above Leonard's shoulder. Beside his host's brawny, unwrinkled innocence he was like the weather-beaten sheath of a rapier.

"Your pardon, Doctor," he said, "but since you wish my judgment, never place yourself in a lighted window. That's a habit it costs little to acquire, while failure to acquire it in Flanagan County has cost acquaintances of mine a high price."

"Here, Colonel," said Leonard.

Colonel Steptoe McDee took the paper which his host had produced from an inner



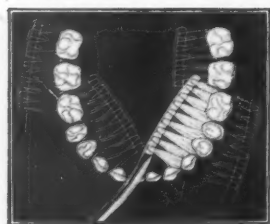


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pocket. After the glance which sufficed him to take in its purport, his eyes remained upon it while his fingers flattened its creases.

"When did this come, Doctor?"

"It was a week yesterday."

"Then your ten days are nearly up."

"They're nearly up."

"How did it come?"

"It was lying on my office floor."

"Door locked?"

"Oh, yes. Always locked when I'm out. And window fastened."

The guest resumed his flattening of the creases. He turned the paper over and back again, as if in study of it.

"I don't know," said he slowly, "what Ace Brown would do." Then he looked up straight in Leonard's eyes. "Doctor, in my opinion this is genuine." And he handed the paper back to the young man.

"Well?" demanded Leonard with a sudden fierceness. "Well, then?"

Steptoe McDee scratched his head.

"Are you going to advise me to quit?" the youth asked in a lowered voice.

The Colonel's clean-shaven lips seemed about to smile, but they did not.

"Doctor, don't crowd me. This requires a right smart of thinking."

Leonard stood, still holding the paper exactly as he had received it, and still speaking very quietly. "Because I want no man's judgment when it comes to quitting. Business or no business—and I owe you all I have—I can decide that point for myself." His face was much redder than when he had flushed virginally on the subject of Maria Sanchez.

"What steps have you contemplated taking?" asked the Colonel.

"There's where I wanted your advice—since it's not a joke."

"I wish I could think it was a joke, sir. I imagine you have made no mention of it except to me?"

"None."

The Colonel stretched out a hand. "Will you entrust that paper to me, sir? I think I can take some steps about it."

"I don't want—"

"No, sir. I know you don't. But will you permit me? Unless I am exceptionally mistaken, I am partly the cause of that paper coming to you—and then I can sometimes exert an influence in this community that others might find—Will you permit me?"

The thread of their discourse was dropped at this point and resumed the next morning. At the sound of a horse galloping, Colonel Steptoe McDee stepped promptly out on the porch—so promptly that he almost pushed Leonard aside as he brushed in front of him.

"Mr. Dade is not at home," he announced in a clear voice as the rider came up. "You will probably find him at the Dos Bocas saloon."

"You've struck it right, first go off, Colonel. I just seen him shot there. It ain't fatal, I'm afraid."

"Oh, it's you, Randy. Glad to see you. Who shot him?"

"Antoñito. But Antoñito was going to apologize to Fluke just as soon as Fluke came to."

"And he'll come to?"

"I reckon. Bullet just kind o' parted Fluke's hair. Antoñito felt he'd been hasty. Antoñito said I was to tell you to come right in, Doc."

"Me?" said Leonard. "Haven't they sent for Professor Salamanca?"

"Seems like you've gained a new patient tonight, Doc."

"To be sure," mused Leonard, "she lives two miles beyond me. Well, I'll go, of course." And he hurried away to the corral.

Randy sat on his horse, and spoke mysteriously. "Two miles ain't Antoñito's reason, Colonel. It's to spite her."

"Isn't a man imprudent to spite his bread and butter, Randy?"

"A man!" exclaimed the other with scorn. "Huh!" He looked over his shoulder, drew close, leaned over and whispered: "Colonel, do you believe she can do all of those things they claim she can do? Them queer things?"

"Randy, I thought you had more sense. If she was as harmless as her stuffed reptiles, Flanagan County could laugh in her face—how did the shooting come up?"

"Well, Colonel, you know when Antoñito quit Maria Sanchez for the Professor, Maria she got interested in Fluke. Well, that seemed to worry Antoñito some. Made him restless. Shouldn't wonder if Maria took Antoñito away from the Professor. Well, tonight at the game Fluke he cashed in early, like he's been doing pretty regular lately, and somebody at the table says, 'Give her my love, Fluke,' and up jumps Antoñito, and down goes Fluke. Antoñito felt he had kind o' lost his head, so he was waiting to apologize when I come away for the Doc. Well, I guess I'll be getting home, Colonel. Colonel, I'm awful glad to hear what you say about them reptiles."

The messenger galloped away, and the Colonel stood on the porch alone, mildly whistling a quaint little melody and shaking his head now and then. Presently Leonard passed the porch on his horse.

"You'll excuse my haste," he said.

"Duty calls you, sir. Many a good man has to waste his time on a useless one in this preposterous world."

Doc Leonard's time was wasted. A fast ride into O'Neil City, a very brief visit to the Dos Bocas saloon, and a slow ride back, brought him to his bed and his sleep in the small hours before the first light. Peace and poker had reigned in the Dos Bocas saloon. The card-players turned their heads to see who was entering, and quietly continued their bets. They were henchmen of Professor Salamanca, true believers in the alligator; to them, Leonard with his Harvard diploma and his poorly furnished office, his alien accent, and his Eastern clothes, were objects of suspicious aversion. He stood by the door for a moment, and then inquired for the wounded man.

"I'll have two cards," said a player to the dealer.

Leonard repeated his question.

"Didn't you meet Fluke on the road?" answered a player, without turning his head.

"Raise you five."

"And five," said another. "Fluke came to. Came to right after Randy started. Otherwise we should have attended to Antoñito."

"Him and Antoñito made it up. Balked us," put in a third. "So you didn't meet him on the road?"

"Raise you ten," said the first player. "Fluke will not need any comb for quite a while. Got a big part in his hair. And ten more. But they made it up like gentlemen. Shouldn't wonder if Fluke was paying that visit Antoñito delayed some. Call you."

So Leonard returned to his bed; and after he had blown out the lamp, he spoke some words aloud in the quiet darkness: "But they made it up like gentlemen. Gosh."

He awoke feeling his shoulders shaken, and aware of the bright new day. Fluke Dade was standing over him, and he wore his hat.

"You're late," said Fluke.

Presently they sat at breakfast, where Mr. Dade still wore his hat and where Leonard still preserved the silence which he had more and more preferred should exist between them, ever since the well-digging had doomed him to so much of Dade's society. His taciturnity disappointed Fluke. Fluke had been sure that the hat would elicit a question, and for this he had ready his answer. This was to be, first, that such things were a man's own business, followed gradually by a condescending indulgence to human curiosity. He had planned to remove the hat, display the part in his hair, and remark: "That would have killed most men." This would have led to everything, the whole tale of the night, with himself the hero of it.

But no opening was given. Leonard drank his coffee and ate his bacon as if there wasn't such a thing as a hat in the room. The hero was deprived of outlet, his recital of glory dammed up in his breast; Antoñito's deadly assault, his own large-hearted allowance for





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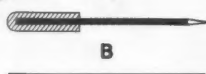
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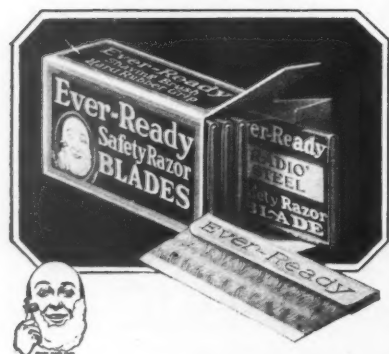
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## Ever-Ready Blades



a rival's passions, his triumph over the supplanted rival—all choked through Leonard's unnatural conduct; and suddenly it burst forth in words entirely unpremeditated.

"I suppose you think you understand women!"

"To that," said Leonard, after sipping his coffee, "I have never given my consideration."

Fluke sat baffled, feeling the obscure presence of an insult.

"I suppose," he said, "you think you can lick me."

"To that also I have never given my consideration." And finishing his bacon, Leonard rose. It was the last morning of his bondage, and he looked at the seated, sullen Fluke, who reminded him of some mongrel bull. Fluke longed to take off his hat, but he decided that this man was not worthy to see the part in his hair.

"The well's waiting for us," he said.

The happy pair went to the well through the sweet odors and the early light. The crimson had not yet quite left the long, high, slender clouds, which shone with the same hues that yesterday's sunset had given them. The chain rattled in the silence as Leonard slowly descended with his tools; and presently from the bottom the clink of his perfecting strokes ascended into the silence. Zest animated his supple body, again his coat and shirt were off and his skin was glistening. He performed his skilful surgery of the rocks with special pride. He tamped the fuse deeper and firmer than was needed, and was sorry no one would know how neat and pretty a job he had done.

At length the whole crevice was packed smooth and tight. It was waist high; and satisfaction filled him as he leaned back lazily, and looked round upon his completed task like a prisoner who has served his term and is about to leave his cell. He struck a match; and as the long snaky coil of the protruding fuse began to hiss, he gave his signal, and the clanking chain responded, resounding in the hollow depths as it lifted him and his tools upward. What was that? Suddenly he crashed down to the bottom. Had the chain broken? No. He shook it, and looked upward. Had he heard something just before he fell? Waist high, the fuse hissed. To his startled spirit it seemed like something animate, mocking and malign.

He called, and shook the chain, and called louder; but no voice answered and no face looked down. Bewilderment flooded through him. Was this intentional? Could Fluke actually mean—? The sparks of the fuse struck his arm. He shouted wildly and shook the chain with all his force. It hung slack, and he looked at the fuse. It hissed and dwindled in the fierce silence of the narrow prison it shared with him. He took it, pulled, jerked; tilting back, he dragged. It neither broke nor budged. Too few minutes remained to undo the work of his zeal.

His hand dived into his pocket, but his knife was at the house. He seized the pickaxe and struck at the fuse vainly; its position and the jutting stones foiled him. He snatched his coat and shirt, and wrapped them round the shortened remnant, but the fire merely burned through them. One foot more and it would reach the crevice. With inspiration he jammed the coil between his teeth and ground them savagely; and the burning stump fell into the dust and hissed itself out.

Leonard sat down with his arms across his knees and his head on his arms. He felt such sudden, overwhelming exhaustion that he did not move and took no notice of his thoughts. After a time the sensation of cold stirred him, and he put on his charred clothes and in a sort of trance fingered the protruding shred of the fuse. Then he looked up. There hung the motionless chain, and there was the sky. It was a long way to climb.

"If he did mean it—or if he didn't—why doesn't he investigate?" he said aloud, and he stood leaning against the stones and staring up. At length he sat down. There was no hurry, and resting was delicious, and he was

getting warm. He dozed off. He started awake at the rattling of the chain, and stared up. A head was showing—the head of Colonel Steptoe McDee.

"Doctor! Doctor! Are you all right?"

"Most decidedly."

"You're not hurt?"

"Not a bit."

"I'll haul you up, sir, if you're in a condition to come."

"Never was in better shape."

The chain rattled and Leonard was ready in a flash, tools and all, as if it might go up without him.

"What's the matter with Fluke?" he called.

"Mr. Dade, sir," said the voice, "will never have anything the matter with him again."

As Leonard very slowly ascended, for the Colonel, though wiry, was light, he knew well enough what he should find.

Against the windlass, in a crumpled fashion, much as yesterday, lay Fluke; but today he was not snoring. The Colonel's diagnosis was accurate. Leonard looked up at the Colonel.

"He was stone-cold, sir. You must have been down there quite a while."

The young New Englander nodded.

"You didn't hear the shot? Well, Doctor, I thought I did, but I went on clipping my horse after listening. Then after a while I thought I heard parties riding over yonder." He pointed through the live-oaks. "That did start me thinking—and I thought I'd pay you a morning call. I have reached a conclusion, Doctor. Have you formed any theory?"

Leonard shook his head. Utterance came hard.

"You were in the well. And then what?"

"I'd finished. He was hauling me up."

"I see, sir. You had lighted the fuse and the chain was making a noise. Well, sir, that strengthens my conclusion. The party—or parties—had gone, as I say. There are too many who pass here for the dust to reveal much. But yonder live-oaks are very convenient. I believe I have mentioned to you that Professor Salamanca is a remarkable woman?"

Leonard was silent.

"Last night," said the Colonel, "I asked you to permit me to take steps about that paper you found on the floor of your office. I can still take some. It was a near thing."

"Very close, indeed," said Leonard.

"The moment for firing that shot was well planned, sir. But those riders yonder—that was later. I don't see—well, Doctor, let us get him into the house first."

They had to get the Mexican to help them. In time the owner of the ranch was decently laid in his bed.

"Doctor Leonard," said the Colonel, "would you mind making a call on Professor Salamanca in my company?"

"Whatever you advise, Colonel."

They set forth through the live-oaks. About a mile along their way, they saw somebody suspended from a tree. He proved to be Antonito, and upon him a notice was pinned which condemned all persons who apologized and behaved inconsistently.

The Colonel spoke musingly. "So she let her instant lover do the killin' of his rival, and then her friends attended to him. Three birds with one stone! But she missed the third. By your leave, Doctor, I'll make my call without you."

"Your conclusion, Colonel, is that I am unlikely to succeed in Flanagan County?"

"Doctor, it's not your own health I ask you to consider. The health of any new patients of yours might grow precarious."

"I see, Colonel."

"I wish I could do better for you, Doctor. I wish I could with all my heart. Don't heed the ten days. I am not entirely defeated. Your departure shall be dignified. But this free-born community, sir, would allow no material restraint to be put upon the ideas of a citizen so influential as Professor Salamanca. I wonder who she will find to console her for her sad loss?"

## In the Garden of Eden

(Continued from page 89)

said before breakfast is to count, we remained in a state of armed neutrality until our train arrived. Ham and eggs in a dining-car, civilization in a strip the exact width of the train! And on either side the unchanged country and its unchanged inhabitants!

But a new era has come. The Turk has gone, after enriching the sultan and his favorites for four hundred years. It is no longer necessary to cut down the trees to avoid paying the tax on them. The British military roads now serve peaceful purposes, and after all these centuries of water sold from dirty sheepskins, or caught on the flat roofs and then stored in stagnant tanks in cellars, the cities have a water-supply.

There was no railroad from Haifa in Palestine to Beirut in Syria. I don't know why we had thought there would be, and the fact came as a shock. We engaged a car, with a chauffeur who spoke only Arabic and a guide who slept all the way, and made the trip in six hours. At dusk we drew into Beirut and went to the Grand Hotel.

That evening, Saturday, I wrote a few final words to the family to be delivered in case of accident, and at five o'clock of a Monday morning a large and handsome Panhard car stopped in front of our hotel. It was brand-new, luxurious and—one hoped—more or less bullet-proof. Into it we packed our two suitcases, the Head's camera, the extra fur coat which Lord Allenby had mistakenly assured me I would need, and ourselves. Also a large and heavy book in French, relating to India and presented to us by the smiling and genial host of the hotel, who apparently labored under the impression that we were going there.

This latter we placed in the netting overhead, from which at every bump it dropped onto one or the other of us. And bumps were numerous. So numerous, indeed, that on the 700-mile return journey in a Dodge car, holding himself down to save himself from a fractured skull, the Head wore the seat entirely out of his trousers, and was forced to alight in Beirut on a broiling hot day, clad in a heavy overcoat.

"I know now why they call it a Dodge car," he said ruefully. "I've done nothing but dodge in the darned thing."

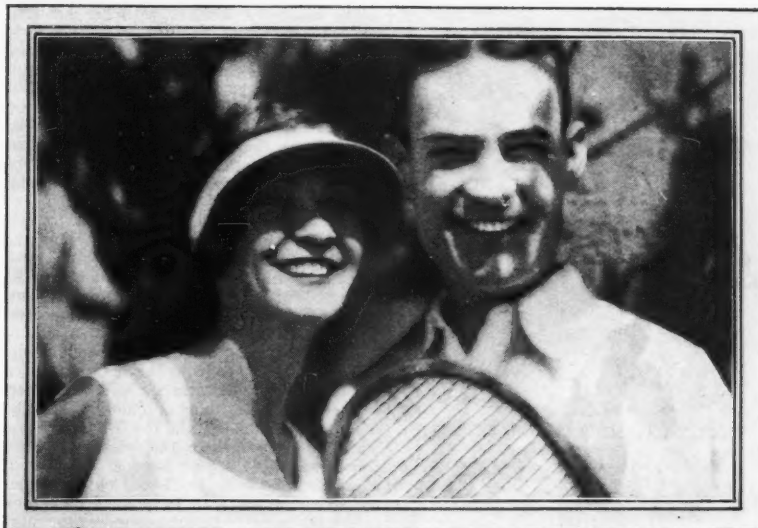
But the Dodge was better than the Panhard, as it turned out. By five-thirty A. M. a Swiss gentleman with an agreeable smile and no conversation had settled himself beside the driver; we had picked up Madame, a delightful and polyglot person who changed from German to French, from English to Arabic probably without splitting an infinitive; the Captain, who is an official of the company, had placed a revolver in a side pocket of the car and crawled in beside it; and we were off.

Fine macadam roads climbed the great Lebanon range, with beautiful Mount Hermon covered with snow. From the top of that mountain wall, when we could turn our eyes from the twisting road that clung along the cliffs, we could see Beirut far below, lying amid its olive-trees on the blue Mediterranean. A little city, yet famous throughout the East for the great American university we have built there; perhaps the single greatest opportunity for self-improvement the East possesses, and certainly the most far-reaching in its influence.

We grew acquainted. On top of the mountain wall we stopped and had hot coffee, and grew better acquainted.

The Bedouins? Well, they were Bedouins; one never knew about them. There were bad people among them, but so were there bad people everywhere. Major Imbrie had gone in by this route safely enough; it was in Teheran he had been killed.

But bit by bit, here and there, I got the story of the French vice-consul's wife, and a sad story it was.



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Address.....

The murdered woman, with her husband and baby, had been en route from Bagdad to Beirut. They had crossed the Wadi Harun, that treacherous creek in which later the Panhard was to stick, and a few miles beyond it out of the darkness bullets began to rain on the car. Radiator and tires were punctured and the car came to a stop. After it had stopped the shooting continued, aimed at the chauffeur, but it was the woman beside him who was struck and mortally wounded.

The Bedouins paid no attention to her. As she lay dying they rifled the car and the travelers, taking also the vice-consul's dispatch bags, which were found the next day slit open and with their papers scattered about. Then the Bedouins parted, and the second car of the convoy found this small tragedy of the desert awaiting them—a dead woman who still clutched in her hand her baby's shoes, a crying, hungry child and a distracted father.

They got to the ruins of Palmyra, and the Arab village built within the Temple of the Sun. And from there the word went out. Immediately the strong hand of the British government took hold. It sent out its camel police in force, and from the guilty tribe it took twelve hostages, to be hanged unless the murderers were surrendered.

And things had reached this pass as we started out. Later on we were to pick up this story again, on our way over to see four suspicious Bedouin figures watching us, and farther along to meet the camel corps and make our report. And on our journey back, strangely enough, we were to happen on the end of the story, to come face to face with it.

Damascus at ten o'clock, coffee, the customs house, picking up the French mail for Bagdad, and off again. We had been joined by a small truck, or camionette, and another passenger-car, a pilot car carrying a guard with a rifle, and our convoy was now complete.

Through the center of the town, rather like a modern French city, the convoy moved, and then into a different world; a world of narrow, twisting streets, with camels moving aside to let our car through, and incredibly tiny shops, where the silver and inlay workers squatted over their work, and hideous Western trade goods competed with the native stuffs.

Narrow corners, which the Panhard negotiated with difficulty, scowls from the natives as our horn cleared the way, and we were out on the great plain which a few miles beyond becomes the Syrian desert.

It grew hot. While we moved it was bearable, but when for any purpose the car halted, the heat was intolerable. We stopped for water for the cars in an Arab village, stuck at a street-corner the Panhard could not turn, backed and tried another way, and were at last on the desert itself. It stretched away to the east of us, five hundred miles of it, to the Valley of the Rivers, where the Euphrates pours down its yellow flood and Bagdad sits beside the Tigris. And can sit there alone forever, for all of me.

The desert again. But this time a different desert. A hard-packed, arid desert, not of sand but of what resembled the adobe mud of our Western states. A little rain and it becomes impassable; the feet slip in the gumbo, car wheels turn helplessly, and even the Bedouins, watching their herds of camels, sheep, and goats, remain where they are until the sun has dried the earth again.

During the rains, an almost imperceptible grass grows, and on this the vast herds feed. The tribes follow this grass, and as the rains occur at different seasons east and west, are always on the move.

All day long we passed through these herds. Now and then we passed a camp, savage dogs barking and children running. But toward evening we seemed to have left all life behind us; we were in an empty world. As darkness closed down, the lights of the car appeared to make a path through a dense black forest, and so overwhelming was this feeling that at last I spoke of it.

Madame moved in her seat. "Strange!" she said. "I feel it too. An unfriendly forest."

Even the Swiss gentleman acknowledged the same sensation, and it persisted during all the hours of darkness over and back. And as the hours progressed, to this and my fatigue was added a certain uneasiness. Details of the attack the week before rose in my mind, and on either side closed in that imaginary forest, concealing who knew what of the sinister and the wicked?

However, at ten o'clock that night we drove safely into the ruins of Palmyra, and under what is left of the Temple of the Sun found the rest-house, and clean beds. Perhaps by this time the company's new building is ready, and if so something of the picturesqueness of our arrival will be lost.

The rest-house, when we were there, was the house of the local sheik. Around a small courtyard were its one-story buildings, and when we had driven in the gates were closed and fastened. We had a quick view of the men of the sheik's family, gathered on the earthen floor of a room to the right and drinking the eternal thick black coffee, and of a pet sheep in the kitchen where our meal was being prepared. A lantern moved about the courtyard, and a sense of the eeriness of our situation began to make itself felt.

Beds we had, clean and comfortable, and water to wash with, but of other toilet facilities as we know them there were none whatever. The lantern shone on strange bearded faces and figures clothed in swarming Arab garb. And outside our shelter, their huts filling the Temple of the Sun whose ruined façade lifted itself above us in the starlight, was a barbarous and not too friendly population.

However, as it turned out, we were not so far from the strong arm of authority as we had believed. We had no more than begun to hunt our soap and tooth-brushes than an Arab appeared at our door and summoned us. We were to go somewhere.

We endeavored to explain. We were tired and hungry and dirty. We were not in condition to pay calls, and so on. But in the end we had to go.

It was hair-raising. Behind him in the darkness we slid and stumbled, groped and clutched. And at last we were in a small building, with a French officer in uniform behind a real desk! At the moment I could have kissed him. Later on . . .

We had no visa for Irak! We had so many visas on our passports that the space had run out; we were visaged for every British possession, including the Prince of Wales' ranch at Calgary, and the Albert Memorial, but somebody had slipped up on Irak.

The matter seemed serious. In vain we pleaded. The officer turned to a gorgeous individual in a white silk turban and brilliant *aba*, with his eyes heavily made up with kohl, and this personage eyed us and evidently considered us highly suspicious.

At this impasse I remembered our credentials from the Department of Labor. At a White House reception Secretary Davis had asked us if we would care to go on our trip as special agents of the department, gathering such information as came to hand, and on our eagerly agreeing, had sent us various papers. So various, indeed, that the Head had sent him a post-card of our camel caravan from Egypt, saying on it that "The rear camel is laden with the credentials of the Department of Labor!"

These we now produced, but if the French officer weakened the handsome Bedouin remained obdurate. I have a feeling that if I had had a chance to wash my face and powder my nose I might have influenced him, but as things were it looked hopeless.

In the end, however, we paid some twenty dollars, the French officer poured some water into the drying ink, signed on the dotted line, and doubtfully let us go.

Late that evening the sheik himself came to see us. Somewhere in a compound beyond us were the eight members of his harem and

his twenty-two children; also, from a later glimpse I had of the place, some of his sheep and his goats, his dogs and his horses. But he came alone.

A fine, benevolent old figure he was, rather like a patriarch of Biblical times. And with some of the ancient weaknesses, too. He regards his family with a certain bored philosophy, but in order to see him really brighten one must inquire into his past. Then, ah then, he draws himself up. Once more he is the handsome young sheik, running away from his wives and his children, his sheep, his goats and his camels, with a beautiful lady from Paris.

His eyes snap. He is ready for any lurid detail. He shows the gold watch he got there, and that it still goes. Happy days, great days, wonderful days! But he says nothing of that time six years later when he returned to his desert again, riding gravely on a camel, leading another on which were packed the buhl chest, the gilt mirrors, the silver-mounted pistol, which still mark his ancient conquest.

Later he slept in his room. The buhl chest, inlaid with mother of pearl, was warped and cracked with neglect, its color dimmed with dirt. The antique gilt mirrors had suffered the same fate, and were hung some seven feet from the ground! Only the pistol, in its worn scabbard, gleamed with care and with use.

His eldest son, showing me to this chamber, pointed to it proudly. "The weapon of my father," he said. "From Paris."

For the benefit of those romantic ladies who dream of being abducted by a sheik, I made a careful record of the contents of that room.

Picture, then, a small room opening onto a second and even dirtier courtyard, with two windows which do not open. On leaving the door wide a large and bony white horse attempts to enter, and is repulsed with difficulty. Two brilliant saddle-cloths hang on the wall, and below them a canvas sack contains the other camel trappings. A handsome sword, inlaid with silver and in a silver scabbard, decorates another wall, between two small imitation Oriental rugs, made probably in Manchester, England. The room has been swept for visitors, but not dusted, and on shelves over the beds, thick with the dirt of ages, are a large white soup tureen, a broken mustache-cup painted with flowers, an empty tin box marked "ginger biscuits," a litter of unwashed glassware, and an ancient carbine.

With the mirrors and the chest of drawers, and the beds and wash-stand placed there by the company, this completed a room undoubtedly the boast of the entire region.

Almost before it was fully light we were off again on the long run between Palmyra and Quebeissa. We had picked up another passenger in Palmyra, a British official bound for Bagdad, and the Captain and his comforting revolver had moved to the car ahead.

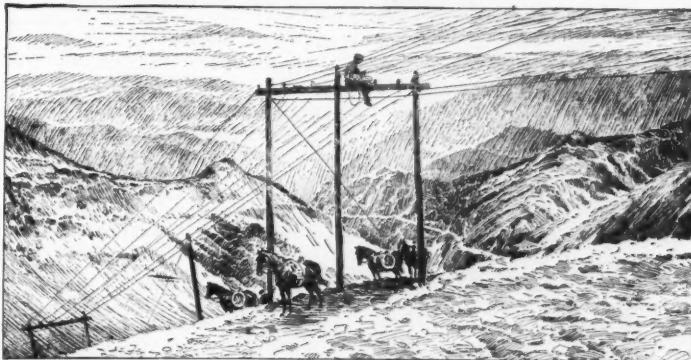
The heart of the desert now. As the sun rose higher the heat became intense. My fur coat lay on the floor under my feet; the water in the canteens was tepid and horrible; mirages of cool lakes and tiny islands formed in front of us, only to dissolve into the dry and empty earth; and we sank into a lethargy from which we roused at the sound of shooting.

It turned out, however, that the Captain was firing at a wolf, and our hearts went back to normal again.

Seated on the running-board of the car for shade, at noon we ate what remained of our dried sandwiches from Beirut, and drank our hot tea. My interest in Bagdad had died of a sunstroke, and even a polite battle between Madame, who was a feminist, and the Englishman, who was not, could not cheer me. The Arabs could have Arabia, for all of me, and the English could have Bagdad. So far as I was concerned, the whole damned East could get along without me from then on.

The country was empty. Not even camels now relieved the monotony. Here and there a skeleton lay, for unlike the Sahara this desert does not bury its dead beneath kindly drifting sands. But of life there was little. Three

Telephone line over the Rocky Mountains



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SPANNING the country, under rivers, across prairies and over mountain ranges, the telephone builders have carried the electric wires of their communication network. Half a century ago the nation's telephone plant was a few hundred feet of wire and two crude instruments. The only builder was Thomas A. Watson, Dr. Bell's assistant.

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hundred miles we must have gone that day.

Some time after luncheon, however, we did see life. Four Bedouins, without the excuse of herds to guard, were standing to our left a quarter of a mile away, quietly watching us. And as four Bedouins had constituted the party which had attacked the car the week before, the fact was suspicious.

They made no hostile move, however. They merely stood and watched us with a sort of concentrated intensity, and once again monotony seized us, and fatigue, and almost despair.

The track varied. Sometimes there was no track, indeed, and the car flew over the smooth hard ground to some distant landmark we did not know. Again it wound up low dune-like hills, up which we bumped and down which we slid, while the book on India descended on us and the brakes smoked. Always we were riding against time—for this remarkable service not only performs a miracle; it does so twice a week, on scheduled hours.

At three in the afternoon we were brought to a sudden halt. Half asleep, we roused to see the track barred by Arabs on camels, and heavily armed.

"Whash the matter?" said the Head drowsily. "We're held up," I said in a dreadful tone.

Now I have always maintained that in a crisis I can keep my head. Therefore I at once proceeded carefully to tuck our last remaining bottle of mineral water under the seat cushion behind me, and the Head, I believe, grabbed the camera. After the excitement was over I found my purse on the car floor, but we did not find the mineral water until we no longer needed it.

After all this, it turned out to be the Arab desert patrol, out on their camels after the murderers. The line on the company's circulars, to the effect that each ticket carried a thousand pounds, or five thousand dollars, of insurance could be again forgotten. These were friends.

They made a dramatic picture. Perhaps forty camels and their riders, in the picturesque dress of the Arab police, fully armed and grimly intent on their errand, they stopped only long enough to gather our information, and then to push on again. They had come a long distance already, and they were to be a week or so longer in the desert before they found their men.

The sun had set when we reached the first running water since leaving Damascus. During the spring rains the Wadi Harun is a considerable stream, but it had dwindled to a small creek in a wide river bed. However the Panhard was a heavy car, making its first trip.

Would it get through? Or would it not?

It would not. Dashing it flew at the stream, only to come to an ignominious stop in the center and there to proceed to sink. We crawled out. One other car had got through and had blithely gone on, and we were bogged down in the heart of the desert! Arab police or no Arab police, I didn't like it. There were too many hills around that wadi, for one thing, and it was only ten miles or so from the scene of the outrage for another.

The car came up. It carried spades for such emergencies, and the digging began. One hour, two hours they dug. Twilight fell; the cold evening wind began to blow; we had breakfasted at dawn and lunched lightly at eleven; and the *khan* at Quebeissa and dinner were still a hundred miles away.

Disconsolately Madame and I hunted a dry place and there sat in gloomy silence . . .

Late that night we drove into a great *khan*, and the high, solid gates were closed and barred behind us. Luxury now; the company rest-house, with hot and cold water, good beds and good food. Even a phonograph!

Over all was the heavy scent of the bitumen wells at Hit, near-by, those very wells from which Noah secured the pitch for the Ark, and which once paved the great main street of Babylon, a hundred feet wide and miles in length; which still covers the reed foundations of those strange Tigris and Euphrates river boats, the circular, tub-like *goofas*.

During the night I wakened to an unearthly shrieking outside our walls—a hyena, perhaps. But all the animals of the aforementioned Ark might have howled that night outside the walls of the *khan* without disturbing me.

I turned over and went to sleep again.

Late the next afternoon we reached Bagdad. We had crossed the Euphrates on its pontoon bridge, had had Arab tea and broiled meat cakes cooked on a charcoal grill in the open street of Felluja, at the end of the bridge, and at last the golden domes and minarets of the mosque at Kadhimain came into view.

Bagdad!

Apparently millions of palm-trees; a road congested with traffic of all sorts; a bridge toll-keeper at a table beside the road, the toll paid in Indian money, for we are in the land of the rupee now; then the pontoon bridge itself, and under it the Tigris—that was our first view of Bagdad.

We drove down the main street, which British imagination running riot has named New Street, turned into a dirty courtyard, stiffly got out of the Panhard, left our luggage for the customs officers and started for our hotel.

I wanted a hot tub bath; in fact, during the entire time I was in Bagdad I wanted a hot tub bath. For I never got it.

In the early days of the British occupancy the Bagdadi who owns Maude's Hotel had, in a burst of enthusiasm, put in two bathrooms. But he is an Oriental, and so the only bursts which have lasted are the bursts in his pipes. On the one occasion when I made a really determined effort to brave the flooded floor, the dirt and the odors of a bathroom opening off the courtyard, I walked in on a British officer in *puris naturalibus* and was compelled to retreat hastily.

Maude's Hotel. I think about it sometimes, its untidy dining-room, with sparrows stealing the food from the tables and the crumbs from under one's very feet; with the dishes being washed on the floor of the courtyard in filthy, greasy water; with the refuse, when the British sanitary officer's back is turned, thrown out to decay on the river bank under our windows; with its hard cotton pillows, which were not pillows in our sense of the word at all, but head-rests of some sort of lumpy felt; and with its menu, before me as I write, of greasy "soup, mixed grilled, onion and boiled potatoes, Irish stew and vermicelli pudding."

Heat, smells, flies and mosquitoes came indiscriminately through our open windows. An untidy servant waited on us during the day and at night, poor wretch, lay down on the bare boards outside our door to sleep. Two high flights of outside wooden stairs led from the courtyard to our bedroom, and to reach them from the street we traversed another courtyard, went down steep stone steps past the bar, up more and steeper steps into the rear court, and then began to climb again.

And the room, when we reached it, was certainly not worth the effort.

If, as some British writer has recently said, agriculture and tourists are the only reliable futures of Mesopotamia, somebody should take mine host of Maude's Hotel out and drown him in the Tigris.

But British writers are mostly very pessimistic about Bagdad, and all of Mesopotamia. More than pessimistic; they are bitter. Curious, to think that Great Britain has become the greatest Moslem power in the world. Curious, too, to remember the part the proposed Bagdad Railway played in the war, the long scheming and ambitions of Germany and England toward Mesopotamia, and then to find men like Herbert Asquith calling it the worst investment Great Britain ever made.

What did they expect? To undo in six years the neglect and downright destruction of five hundred years? It has taken them forty years in Egypt, and longer in India.

So the Garden of Eden has lost in popularity since the early days, when Adam and Eve had to be driven out by main force. Under irrigation the Land between the Rivers can be



another paradise; its oil resources are vast and already under development; the labor of an indolent population is a problem, but it will be solved in time. Labor is cheap, from twelve to twenty-four cents a day, and is worth just about that amount. But the exploitation of the country for commercial profit will not be a matter of a day or a year. In twenty years, under proper administration, Great Britain if she remains there could probably afford to throw away India and let go in Egypt. She would still be rich.

The Garden of Eden! At Kurna, where the Tigris and Euphrates unite, there is an old tree, locally known as the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Naturally the British Tommies took to having their pictures taken in it, and finally this was forbidden. But they persisted, and at last three of them were court-martialed, the indictment gravely reading, "for breaking a limb from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, in the Garden of Eden!"

We were buying a small silk rug. The dealer in the back street wanted 900 rupees, and I turned to the Head.

"How much is that in dollars?"

He made a quick calculation and reported that it was something over \$300. I offered two hundred, but nothing happened, then two hundred and fifty. The dealer sadly shook his head and put the rug away.

"I get many other rugs," he said, "but only one of him. I cannot."

Finally we compromised on \$275, and carried the rug away with us for fear he would change his mind. And the next day we found that, at the rate of exchange for the rupee, his original asking price had been only \$240.

Every now and then I ask myself if I really travel to learn and to see, or travel to shop. Only the other day I caught myself saying, in a very casual voice: "Oh, yes. We picked that up in Bagdad." And waiting for the caller to say: "Bagdad! Have you been to Bagdad?"

I am still trying to find a place in the house where my blue enameled Damascus tray won't stick out like a sore thumb; in the long Georgian drawing-room the low, carved Turkish table with a brass brazier on it looks as though the moving men had put it there and forgotten to take it away; and of the porcelain figure of a dancing Korean girl, which the Head carried painfully under his arm on and off ships and finally home, I saw a duplicate the day we landed in a New York shop.

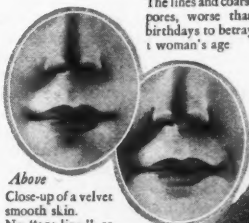
We shopped in Bagdad. There was nothing else to do, except to go to the movies! We tried that only once, sitting in the box of a small and almost empty theater, and seeing dimly projected without music an ancient French picture. As in all the Orient, the titles were not in one language but in three. They ran to the left of the picture on a separate roll, and as the action of the two machines was not always synchronous, the result was pure confusion.

But what strange ideas of our civilization these Oriental peoples must receive! Of shootings and seductions, of half-clothed women, in a land still of secluded ones. The hoots and derisive laughter at the suggestive situations they are so quick to grasp, have something contemptuous in them. As if they said: "And this is Christian civilization! Wherein is it better than ours? Or so good?"

The movies then, and the bazaars, were all we had. There were no windows from which to view the street, that one wide street blasted by the Turks when the war began so that they could get their motor transport through. They simply blew up the buildings.

The only view to be obtained was from a stone bench inside the entrance arch. There for hours I sat, watching that strange procession which is Bagdad—Kurdish coolies in rags and skins; Jewish women in brilliant brocades of orange and rose and green and blue, draping body and head, the face concealed by what looked like the wide end of a wire fly-swatter; cripples and blind men, dandies carrying and

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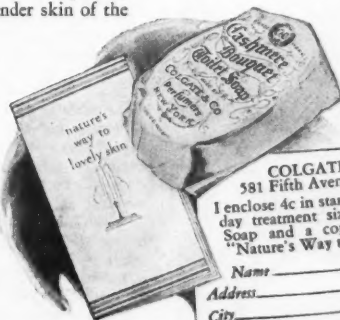
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Wet the face with warm water. Work up a thick Cashmere Bouquet lather on the hands. Massage this into the skin with the fingertips until the skin feels refreshed and alive. Rinse in warm water. Then a dash of cold. Pat the face dry with a soft towel. If the skin is inclined to be dry, rub in a little Colgate's Charmis Cold Cream.



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fingering their prayer-beads, people of all nations and all creeds.

Down the street to the right was the American consulate, its rear veranda overlooking the Tigris. So great is the heat that in summer the executive offices are moved into the basement, but the business of America must be looked after, her occasional tourists speeded on their way. What thought do we ever give these people, serving us in exile?

In heat and in cold, often under impossible health conditions and in hostile surroundings, these remote agents of our government live and frequently die, not only unhonored and unsung, but unknown.

But it was in the great bazaar that we saw native life at its noisiest, its dirtiest, and its most pitiful. Its streets only paths, so crowded in places that two people can pass with difficulty, on either side each merchant sits cross-legged within a tiny cubicle, his small stock spread before him. Roofed in as it is, the air is bad, the heat atrocious. The earth underfoot is dank with the filth of ages.

Through the crowd goes a coolie, bent double and carrying on his back a structural steel beam! It is an I-beam, possibly fifteen feet long, or even more. His feet wide apart, his face pale, his breath coming in gasps, he staggers along. They do not live long, these men.

In the Street of the Scribes, the letter-writers are at work, squatted behind low tables. Here is a veiled woman, dictating in a low voice; there a family group, arguing noisily, while the scribe waits stoically. But they are learning to write in Bagdad. I visited a night-school there, where the youngest pupil was a boy of eight and the oldest a bearded patriarch of seventy.

The jewelers have a street of their own in the bazaar. Their stocks of rubies and sapphires lie out in common white saucers, and their antique lapidaries' wheels are as they were five thousand years ago. The stones are sold by the carat, and are astonishingly cheap.

An incredible din draws us to the Street of the Metal Workers, and we find the workers in tin, in iron, in brass and in copper. Their forge fires blaze, throwing into relief their half-naked bodies, their muscular arms. All their work is done by hand; their hammers whang and white-hot metal glows. Outside are hanging their finished wares. I buy two brass trays and carry them along.

I have them now. They are sitting upright on top of the book-shelves in the library, and every time a door slams they fall down. Besides, they don't belong in the house. None of the stuff I bought really belongs except the rug. The dogs like to sleep on that.

There came a day when heat, sparrows, flies, mosquitoes and scents from the river bank were too much for us; when the servants, eating broken food in the courtyard, revolted us; and when my high clean bed at Beirut, into which I climbed from a chair, and the modest bathroom with no leaking pipes and Englishmen *in puris naturalibus*, began to call us.

So once more we set out, in a Dodge car this time, driven by a temperamental Syrian. More people apparently wished to leave Bagdad than to get there, and so we had two cars of passengers, and a Russian gentleman and an Armenian lady in the truck.

The Russian gentleman had preempted the seat beside the driver, so the Armenian lady sat in the back, on a trunk!

The silent Swiss was returning also; he and the Head had the rear seat of the car, along with the camera, dressing-cases, extra wraps, bottles of mineral water, bags of fruit and boxes of crackers. I was beside the driver.

At the last moment, however, came Brown, the man at whom the shots had been fired the night of the hold-up, and now to be our escort and guard. He too went into the rear seat, and in this fashion did we start back on our three-day journey across the desert again.

It was a gray and windy day. The Tigris, on which we had so gaily floated in our *goofa*,

was drab and swollen under the bridge as we crossed it. No rafts of inflated sheepskins floated on its angry surface; no fishermen flung their nets from their round, tub-like boats.

The palms bent to the gale, and the dust of a thousand years stung our faces and filled our eyes. Even the golden domes of the mosque at Kadhimain were tarnished; Kadhimain the fanatic city, where we had gone under guard the day before Ramadan, and where I had held my skirt back from the vegetable stalls, for fear of a riot should the touch of an infidel pollute the food.

And when we emerged into the desert it was worse. The dry soil rose in clouds, and the wind gave it a cutting quality I had not foreseen. That night, back in the *khan* at Quebeissa again, I found that a large portion of the hair below my hat had been neatly sheared off by the flying sand!

Of conversation there was none. All of us were watching the track, along which our Mahmoud Ali Hassan drove us at a blood-curdling rate. The speedometer went to ninety, a hundred kilometers, and stayed there. I clutched my hat, the Head held to the top brace with one hand and a side brace with the other. And for three days, more or less, I clutched and the Head held on, across the desert once more.

It was on the second day that we sighted the Camel Corps again. We had crossed the Wadi Harun without trouble and were within a half-mile of the scene of the murder when along the horizon to the right a camel came in sight. It was followed by another and another, until in a long row the entire corps was silhouetted against the sky.

We turned off the track, and across the hard desert drove toward it. Politely its officers halted the line, and, the camels having knelt, dismounted.

They had found the murderers, or at least three of them. What is more, they were there, on camels and securely handcuffed. And with us was Brown!

At our request they took the men from their animals and brought them forward. Like all Arabs they feared the evil eye, and one could hardly be persuaded to take his hand from his face.

It was a dramatic meeting, there in the heart of the Syrian desert, the three wretches protesting their innocence, and the impassive Englishman they had tried to kill.

I do not even know if Brown was able to identify them. He was not talkative, perhaps by instruction from Headquarters. But they had been turned over by their tribe as the guilty ones, and the justice of the desert is quick and sure.

Strange times indeed have come to the Arabs. Their desert no longer hides them. From the air great machines carrying men can pry out their hidden refuges, and what are their camels against the unbelievers' motor-cars? And now come the British and the French, and for the mere matter of a killing, take hostages so that their very tribesmen turn betrayers.

The Black Camel kneels before their tents indeed.

At a word from the officers the murderers were taken back to their camels. The soldiers swung into their saddles, the animals rose, and at a brisk trot the imposing procession moved on. Equally impassive, Brown got into the Dodge and we too started off. He never referred to the matter again.

It rained the next day. Not a real rain, but a small fine drizzle which was hardly a rain at all. It was enough, however! The morning of the third day saw us west of the ruins of Palmyra and wallowing in apparently bottomless mud. Some place, I have no idea just where, we found the Panhard, and digging it out we brought it along.

We took the Armenian lady from her trunk in the truck and placed her on its velvet cushions, and it is not my fault that the Russian gentleman got in too. But their comfort was only for a brief period. Two hours later we struck a deep wash. The

Dodge, by digging and pushing, got out in due time, but the Panhard stayed.

We sat on a bank and watched the Armenian lady, who for some reason wore black velvet slippers, get out into the deep muck and wade ashore. We mildly cheered when the Russian had to do the same thing. But mainly we just sat. Sat for hours, while time went by, and stray dogs from an Arab village near-by begged for food, and two cutthroats with old muzzle-loading rifles and long braids of hair kept toying with their guns in a manner I considered highly suggestive.

A French army supply train came along, fourteen wagons covered like our old prairie-schooners, and each drawn by three horses. It was bound for some distant desert post, but it did not attempt to pass. Or to help!

Our water was gone, and of our food only two oranges remained. The sun came out, and while it was drying the mud it was broiling us. Only a hundred and fifty miles or so to the west of us lay Damascus, and food and civilization—but they seemed a million miles away.

And then the Panhard moved.

Late that night I crawled up the high steps of the Grand Hotel de Bassoul in Beirut. I had two brass trays under my arm, and the Head carried the rug.

I needed a bath. I needed everything. A tray of food was brought to the room, but I could not even eat.

Thankfully but stiffly I pushed a chair beside my high bed, mounted it and crawled in. During the night the wind blew the brass trays down and probably roused the entire hotel, but I never even heard them fall.

## Three Wise Men

(Continued from page 57)

appreciate any little small attentions you might continue to show him. But this is a hard world—people get careless sometimes; you can't always depend on them. Not knocking you or anything, but still I'd like to make certain that you won't go back on any little promise you might have made to him lately. See what I'm going to do next?"

From his desk he took up a pair of scissors and with one swift clip of their blades sheared the yellow-back squarely in two across the middle. Isgrud said nothing to this but kept eyeing him intently.

"Now then, I put one-half of this bill into my pocket," proceeded Finburg; "and the other half I'm handing over to you"—doing so. "Separated this way, these halves are no use to anybody—none to me, none to you. But paste them together again and you've got a thousand-dollar bill that's just as good as it ever was. For the time being, you keep your half and I'll keep my half. I'll have it right here handy on my person and ready to slip it over to you when the contract that I've been speaking of is completed.

"Now, I expect to be seeing our sick friend tomorrow. Tonight I'll be fixing up a couple of documents for him to sign and I'm going to take them up to where he is in the morning. I'll tell him of this little arrangement between us and I'm certain he'll indorse it. I may not see him again until the twenty-seventh of this month." He dwelt meaningfully upon the date. "It looks as though he couldn't last much longer than that—not more than a few hours. And on the twenty-seventh, if the prospects are that he'll pass out within the next twenty-four hours—which is the present outlook—I'll pay him a farewell visit. If everything has worked out right—if you've done him some last favor that he's counting on—why, he'll tip me the word while we're alone together. You won't have to wait much longer than that for what's coming to you. Just as soon as he gives me the word I'll meet you and hand you over the other half of your bill. Is everything understood—everything agreeable to you?"

# Two Beauty Crimes

Ended for you by this NEW and TOTALLY DIFFERENT way of removing cold cream



THE RIGHT WAY

PLEASE ACCEPT—7-day supply to try, the only way that removes ALL germ-laden accumulations from the pores



1

### THE SOILED TOWEL METHOD

Rubs germ accumulations back into the skin, inviting scores of imperfections.

today but employs it. It marks one of the most sensational beauty successes in years.

It lightens a darkish skin several shades or more. It keeps "make-up" fresh hours longer than before. It curbs oily skin and nose conditions amazingly.

Please accept a full 7-day supply to try. It will end for you, two crimes against skin beauty most women who use cleansing creams have unconsciously been practicing for years.

1—Rubbing germ-laden matter back into the skin with towels, cloths, etc., which lack in absorbency; 2—irritating your skin by rubbing cold cream off with harsh material. Scores of skin imperfections now are largely traced to these factors. Stop them, and you'll be amazed at the difference.

## KLEENEX

ABSORBENT

## 'KERCHIEFS

To Remove Cold Cream—Sanitary



2

### THE HARSH CLOTH METHOD

Injures delicate skin fabric—causes enlarged pores, skin roughness, etc.

**A scientific discovery**  
This new way is called Kleenex 'Kerchiefs—absorbent—a new kind of material—different from any you have ever seen—developed in consultation with leading skin authorities solely for the removal of cold cream correctly from the skin.

It has 27 times the absorbency of the ordinary towel. It is the only way yet discovered that properly removes all dirt and germ-laden matter from the pores.

It quickly curbs oily nose and skin conditions. For those are largely caused by cold cream left in the skin which the pores thus constantly exude.

### Use the coupon

A 7-day supply will be sent you. Note results yourself.

Kleenex 'Kerchiefs—absorbent—come in exquisite flat handkerchief boxes, to fit your dressing table drawer . . . in 2 sizes: Boudoir size, sheets 6x7 inches . . . 35c Professional, sheets 9x10 inches . . . 65c

### 7-Day Supply—FREE

KLEENEX CO. C-7,  
167 Quincy St., Chicago, Ill.  
Please send without expense to me a sample packet of Kleenex 'Kerchiefs—absorbent—as offered.

Name.....

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## Sanitation demands this precaution



It is not enough to keep the toilet bowl clean. The hidden trap, too, must be purified—especially in hot weather.

Brushes cannot reach the trap. But Sani-Flush can. It does away with sediment and foul odors. And it banishes all labor and back-bending. Simply sprinkle in Sani-Flush, follow the directions on the can. Flush. Stains, marks, incrustations disappear.

Sani-Flush is a household necessity. It cannot harm plumbing connections. Always keep it handy in the bathroom.

Buy Sani-Flush at your grocery, drug or hardware store, or send 25c for a full-size can, 30c in Far West. 35c in Canada.

### Sani-Flush

Cleans Closet Bowls Without Scouring

THE HYGIENIC PRODUCTS CO.  
Canton, Ohio

## X-BAZIN

Famous French way of Removing Hair

### Beauty X-ercises

When the summer sun invites pretty girls to don their bathing suits X-BAZIN should always be at hand. This harmless hair remover makes unwanted hair disappear like magic from the underarms, forearms, lower limbs and beneath the bob. Delightfully perfumed and easy to use. Made in powder or cream form. Does not increase later growth.

50¢

AT ALL DRUG STORES AND TOILETTE COUNTERS

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Send 10c for sample



Still mute, Isgrid nodded. They shook hands on it after Isgrid had named a suitable place for their rendezvous on the twenty-seventh; then the silent caller took himself away.

Being left alone, Mr. Finburg mentally hugged himself before he set to the task of drawing up the papers for his client's signature. This same Sunday he decided not to go to the Governor of that near-by state with any futile plea for executive clemency. He'd tell Scarra, of course, that he was going; would pretend he had gone. But what was the use of a man wasting his breath on a quest so absolutely hopeless? He salved his conscience—or the place where his conscience had been before he wore it out—with this reflection, and by an effort of the will put from him any prolonged consideration of the real underlying reason. It resolved itself into this: Why should a man trifle with his luck? With Scarra wiped out—and certainly Scarra deserved wiping out, if ever a red-handed brute did—the ends of justice would be satisfied and the case might serve as a warning to other criminals. But if that Governor should turn mush-headed and withhold from Scarra his just punishment, where would Scarra's lawyer be? He'd be missing a delectable chunk of jack by a hair—that's where he would be.

Let the law take its course!

The law did. It took its racking course at quarter past one o'clock on the morning of the twenty-eighth.

Those who kept ward on Tony Scarra, considering him as scientists might consider an inoculated guinea-pig waiting patiently for this or that expected symptom of organic disorder to show itself, marveled more and more as the night wore on at the bearing of the condemned man. His, they dispassionately decided among themselves, was not the rehearsed but transparent bravado of the ordinary thug. That sort of thing they had observed before; they could bear testimony that nearly always toward the finish this make-believe fortitude melted beneath the lifting floods of a mortal terror and a mortal anguish, so that the subject lost the use of his members and the smoothness of his tongue, and babbled wild meaningless prayers and flapped with his legs and must be half-dragged, half-borne along on that first, last, short journey of his through the iron door to what awaited him beyond.

Or, fifty-fifty, it might be that imminent dread acted upon him as a merciful drug which soothed him into a sort of obedient coma wherein he yielded with a pitiful docility to the wishes of his executioners and mechanically did as they bid him, and went forth from his cell meek as a lamb, thereby simplifying and easing for them their not altogether agreeable duties. These experienced observers had come to count on one or the other of these manifestations. In Scarra neither of them was developed.

He seemed defiantly insulated against collapse by some indefinable power derived from within. He betrayed no signs whatsoever of weakening—and this, to those who officiated at those offices, seemed most remarkable of all—when they clipped the hair off the top of his skull for the pad of the electrodes and again when they brought him the black trousers with the left leg split up the inside seam.

All at once though, at the beginning of the second hour after midnight, when the witnesses were assembled and waiting in the lethal chamber, his jaunty confidence—if so, for lack of a better description, it might be termed—drained from him in a single gush. He had called, a minute or two before, for a drink of water, complaining of a parched throat. A filled cup was brought to him. Sitting on a stool in his cell, he turned his back upon the bringer and took the draft down at a gulp, then rose and stood looking through the bars at the keepers, with a mocking, puzzling grin on his lips and over all his face and in his eyes a look of expectancy. The grin vanished, the look changed to one of enormous bewilderment, then to one of the intensest chagrin, and next

he was mouthing with shocking vile words toward the eternity waiting for him. He resisted them when they went in then to fetch him out, and fought with them and screamed out and altogether upset the decorum of the death-house.

He did not curse those whose task it was now to subdue and, if possible, to calm him down. He cursed somebody or other—person or persons unknown—for having deceived him in a vital matter, crying out that he had been imposed on, that he had been double-crossed. He raved of a pill—whatever that might mean—but so frightful a state was he in, so nearly incoherent in his new frenzy of rage and distress and disappointment, that the meaning of what he spoke was swallowed up and lost.

Anyhow, his sweating handlers had no time to listen. Their task was to muffle his blasphemy and get him to the chair, which they did.

Since he continued to struggle in the presence of the audience, the proceedings from this point on were hurried along more than is common. His last understandable words, coming from beneath the mask clamped over the upper part of his distorted face, had reference to this mysterious double-crossing of which plainly, even in that extremity, he regarded himself the victim, and on which, as was equally plain, his final bitter thoughts dwelt. The jolt of the current cut him off in a panted choking mid-speech, and the jaw dropped and the body strained up against the stout breast-harness, and the breath wheezed and rasped out across the teeth and past the lips, which instantly had turned purple, and there was a lesser sound, a curious hissing, whispering, slightly unpleasant sound, as though the life were so eager to escape from this flesh that it came bursting through the pores of the darkening skin. Also, there was a wisp of rising blue smoke and a faint, a very faint smell of something burning.

For absolute certainty of result, they gave Scarra's body a second shock, and the physicians present observed with interest how certain of the muscles, notably certain of the neck muscles, twitched in response to the throb and flow of the fluid through the tissues. But of course the man was dead. It merely was a simple galvanic reaction—say, like eel-meat twisting on a hot griddle, or severed frogs' legs jumping when you sprinkle salt on them—interesting, perhaps, but without real significance. Except for Scarra's unseemly behavior immediately after drinking the water, this execution, as executions go, and they nearly always go so, was an entire success.

Conceded that as to its chief purpose, the plan unaccountably had gone amiss, Mr. Finburg nevertheless felt no concern over the outcome. Privately he preferred that it should have been thus—there being no reason for any official inquiry, naturally there would be no official inquiry. Happy anticipations uplifted him as, sundry legal formulas having been complied with, he went as Scarra's heir to Scarra's bank on Third Avenue and opened Scarra's safe-deposit box.

It would seem that he, too, had been double-crossed. All the box contained was a neat small kit of burglars' tools. It was indeed a severe disappointment to Mr. Finburg, a blow to his faith in human nature. We may well feel for Mr. Finburg.

Of that triumvirate of East Side connivers, there remains the third and least important member, Isgrid, he who, scheming on his own account and in his own protection, had played for safety by smuggling to the late Scarra not number twelve, the poisonous capsule, but number eleven, the harmless one. Let us not spend all our sympathy upon Mr. Finburg but rather let us reserve some portion of it for Isgrid. For this one, he too suffered a grievous disappointment. It befell when, having patched the parted halves of his thousand-dollar bill, he undertook to pass it. It was refused, not because it was pasted together but because it was counterfeit.

## My Little Scheme

(Continued from page 69)

somehow I cannot solidify my visions. At the same time, I know that the society would serve a useful purpose.

The idea is to organize all Americans who travel outside of their own country and have them report to a central office or general headquarters all instances of extortion, disrespect or misrepresentation on the part of any hotel, transportation company, ticket agency or other business thriving on the patronage of bewildered tourists. The central office would investigate each complaint and would report back to members a careful list of all the robbing and lying concerns, provided that all of the names could be crowded into one book, after which arrangements would be made to boycott the offenders if impossible to have them murdered.

The prospectus for this nation-wide brotherhood has been ready for years but, of course, the thing will never go through. It has too much merit. But I could get a million members in a week for a league to compel American travelers to obey all of our home-made restrictive laws while they are in foreign parts.

Now I come to my pet scheme—the one I have promoted and urged and propagandized for years without finding a suggestion of enthusiastic response. I refer to my plan for having a combination of park, forest preserve and recreation field in every county of every state. Our national parks and forest preserves are never seen by the average taxpayer. In the older communities the native trees and shrubs and wild flowers and the birds and small forms of animal life are being exterminated as all of the corners of land are coming under cultivation.

My little plan would be to have a central tract in each county, at least one mile square, set aside as a preserve and to protect within this square mile every form of plant and animal life belonging to the region. The tract would be a bird sanctuary, of course. Most of the park would be left in its native condition. If it lacked any of the trees or bushes or flowers growing wild in the county, the school children would be encouraged to hunt up the native specimens and move them to the protected area.

A part of the tract would be a field where automobiles could be parked, so that any citizen could drive to this great natural park any time and leave his car and go rambling into the woods. Also, there would be an athletic field with an improved football field, at least one good baseball diamond and a good cinder track.

And there would be grand stands or a stadium which would provide seats for a very large crowd.

At present every town in the average county has a bad football field and a poor baseball diamond and a sad excuse for an athletic field. Each county should have, near the geographical center, an arena, on neutral ground, where important games could be staged. Now that we have hard roads and fast cars this field would be within easy riding distance of any part of the county.

This is one of my day-dreams which I know is all right because I have lived in the country for years and I have observed conditions and I know what the people are wanting. The cost to the tax-payers would not be great as compared with what they are spending for schools and roads and bridges and the benefits would be enormous.

It may be that some county somewhere will establish such a park and forest preserve and athletic field and successfully demonstrate how useful and popular it can be. Maybe we can put this scheme over if we surround it with a lot of restrictions and *verboten*s. If we could keep the thing closed on Sunday and not let anyone walk on the grass, I know a lot of good people who might be interested.

### FREE:

A wonderful little book that gives new beauty secrets. Free, with every jar of Ingram's Milkweed Cream.

2

Four  
Simple Ways  
to improve your skin  
—NOW!

By FRED INGRAM Jr., Ph. C.  
B. Sc., (Pharm.)

I. From 16 to 30 you need from 7½ to 8 hours sleep at least four nights out of seven. At 30 to 50, 6½ to 7 hours will do with a daily short rest after lunch or just before dinner. If you would have beauty after 30—get your rest. No cream or cosmetic can compete with loss of sleep.

And you simply *must eat* each day either lettuce, celery, cabbage, carrots, spinach, oranges, white cherries, grapefruit, lemons or tomatoes. Your doctor will tell you just what combinations are good for you personally. Sleep and these foods are a sure foundation for beauty.

II. For the arms, neck, shoulders and hands—at least once a day, lukewarm water and any good soap (Ingram's Milkweed Cream Soap is fine). Then use Ingram's Milkweed Cream on hands, arms, neck and shoulders. Rub it in gently. Don't rub it off. Use only at night before retiring—wear old gloves on hands. You will be astonished. Your friends will comment on the remarkable change in the appearance of your skin with this simple common-sense treatment. Under no conditions use any other cream while you are making this test.

III. For the face, give our cream two weeks' exclusive use. Write the date on the label so that you may watch results carefully. Use no other cream of any kind. Wash your face at night with lukewarm water and Ingram's Milkweed Cream Soap. Rub cream in gently; don't rub it off. Use morning and night, using water only at night to cleanse face. Blisters, blemishes, blackheads, redness, tan, wind, and sunburn will go if you follow the diet suggested and use Ingram's Milkweed Cream exclusively.

Women today will tell you this simple treatment gets results. We have thousands of letters over a period of 40 years that back up our statements. And today thousands are enjoying the beauty insurance which this simple method brings.

IV. If you have a good beauty shop operator, stay with her. But insist that she use your own jar of Ingram's Milkweed Cream. Infections are dangerous. Not one woman in a hundred has a scientific beauty operator.

We are always glad to answer questions—to help those who have been unsuccessful in their search for skin loveliness. Particularly those who want to protect their beauty over a long period of years.

If you are in doubt, take no chances. Do your own facials, arms, neck, hand and shoulder treatments at home. We will teach you how in our little book that comes with each jar of Ingram's Milkweed Cream.



## YOUR ARMS shoulders neck and hands

may be beautiful, ivory white  
... often in TWO WEEKS!

AS last year, afternoon and evening frocks leave the arms, neck and upper back exposed. To be truly charming, beautiful—you must have this!

Smooth, satiny, ivory-white skin—so utterly charming to men!

Ingram's Milkweed Cream has done just this, for over a million women—in this country alone. Use it daily on your hands, on your arms, neck and shoulders. You too will notice pleasing results, often within two short weeks.

Read the four common-sense beauty secrets in the column at the left. It tells you *how*. Then obtain a jar of Ingram's Milkweed Cream at your favorite store. Get it in the 50 cent or dollar size. The dollar size is more economical. Start using it now. And remember:

You need only one cream . . . Ingram's!

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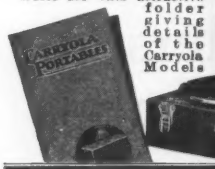
**THE LIFE OF THE PARTY!** Sure antidote for that inevitable slump that always comes. Be it week-end jaunt, evening beach party, vacation trip, or dance at home, a Carryola Master is a peppy and unfailing resource in time of need.

The Carryola Master is the ideal "portable." Carries easily. Packs easily. Holds 15 full-sized records. Plays all makes of records. Four attractive colors or black—all in Genuine Du Pont Fabrikoid with 2-Tone Embossed Art Cover and Record Album.

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make this your evening  
Coffee**

There is a coffee with the caffeine taken out. A pure coffee, a delightful blend. All the flavor and aroma are intact. We simply open the pores and remove the caffeine. That's the drug which makes one wakeful and which harms so many.

The name is Kaffee Hag. It's a coffee you can drink at any hour, and all you want. Children can enjoy it. No one need turn to a substitute.



So good that countless homes have adopted it. The finest hotels now serve it. Not a coffee delight is missing, not a quick bracing effect.

If anyone about you has to stint on coffee, try Kaffee Hag. Send the coupon with a dime for a 10-cup package. It will open the door to all coffee joys. Clip coupon now.

Mail This Today for 10-cup Sample; 10 cts.

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1536 Davenport Ave., Cleveland, Ohio

Name.....

Address.....

**Marriage by H. G. Wells** (Continued from page 33)

the hectic last phase of an order that i. dying. And the woman at home has been stripped more and more of her fundamental economic importance and reduced to the position of a sexual complement. She knows little or nothing of her husband's affairs; they are too far away. She does not brew, she does not bake. She does not so much cook as "warm up." She does not make her linen or control her house, she merely "shops" for it. The gas company is her hewer of wood and the municipality her drawer of water. She touches a button to light her home. To her own relief and her husband's and the community's, she ceases to breed, and such children as she bears are far better educated for her by the trained teachers in properly equipped schools.

Change has robbed her of her normal employments just as it has released her and her man from the sense of sin. There she is.

What is she to do with herself—with herself and her immensely empty afternoons? What are we to do with her? Why not make boys of these women and break up these mere empty shells and shams of suburban households? Let them live in flats and chambers and have their men come and go until they find a proper mate and a task they can share with him. Let them be educated and trained as well as their brothers and put to research and business and productive work. Let them cease to regard their sex—not as a marketable commodity, but as a negotiable right for which they may secure a comfortable living.

What has happened in the sexual life of our western communities during the last two centuries, and which is now becoming world-wide, can be represented by certain very broad statements.

First, the economic revolution and the change of scale in economic operations have done much to break up the homely practical equality of commonplace men and women by

taking one domestic task after another out of the woman's hands, taking economic realities out of her sight and understanding, gathering men workers into office districts, factories and warehouses, and so reducing the link between husband and wife down at last to its sexual core. The increase of knowledge has also lifted the burden of childbearing from the woman.

Meanwhile there has been a vast expansion of reading and a cheapening of books. The literary methods have naturally followed the romantic tradition of the ruling class; for some generations women of the poorer sort were reading nothing but cheap editions and worn library copies originally written and published at a high price for the gentlefolk, and this amounted to a most subtle and effectual propaganda for the romantic attitude in sexual life. There has been a tremendous flooding of the thoughts and motives of the entire community with these cowboy-chevalier ideals.

But now the sense of sin is being lifted from the world with the decline in confidence in these old religious teachings. The theater, and today with enormous force, the cinema, are confirming the teachings of the reverie and the novelette.

An increasing multitude of girls, probably a huge majority of them now, in America and western Europe, is growing up to womanhood with no idea of any sort of worth-while career except that of the heroine of a love story with a powerful, patient, constantly excited and always devoted man. Unhappily there has been no corresponding increase in the supply of cowboy-chevaliers and successful sailor adventurers. And this young man is going to be judged by false standards and treated upon false assumptions.

It is impossible to believe that this pervasion of the contemporary world by sexual romanticism is anything but a passing phase in the huge social readjustments now in progress.

**The Last Nose of Summers** (Continued from page 97)

him. In fact, we were all staring curiously at Jack, who seemed very ill at ease.

"Well, Helene," he gulped, "I—I was satisfied this mock-equine, Beauty Clay, didn't have a Chinaman's chance in the last scramble. So to make a short story swifter, what did I do but lay your dough on the favorite. Here's the ticket—read it and weep!"

"Oh, for heaven's sakes!" gasped Aubrey.

Helene gazed blankly at Jack for an instant, as though she doubted the message of her ears.

Then she sank back in her seat and began to weep softly, while I patted her shoulder consolingly and father regarded her unhappy brother with a quizzical expression. In another moment my parent had thumbed off a number of bills from his bulging wallet and was bending over Helene.

"There, there, little girl, dry your tears!" he said soothingly. "Here is the two thousand dollars you won on the race. I heard you make the bet myself and it was not your fault that your—eh—skeptical relative failed to follow your instructions."

"But why should you pay me?" demanded Helene.

"It is quite all right, my dear," my amazing father smiled easily. "You see, I am financing most of the book-makers here. That is why I did no betting today—I would scarcely wager with myself."

Jack looked at father with astonished relief and undisguised admiration. "Cal, you're the reindeer's shavin' mug, no foolin'!" he murmured, lighting a cigaret. Then he added insinuatingly, "Eh—speakin' of truffles, I dropped four hundred to you too!"

"That is too bad, my boy," coldly remarked father, placing his wallet inside his coat. And

he turned to assist the now smiling Helene with her wrap.

It was but a few moments later that Montague Summers, the subject of this tale, came into our lives.

We repaired to the comfortable club-house where Aubrey happened upon Summers, then star of "Well, Well, Wilhelmina!" and introduced us. I took an instant and instinctive dislike to this sleek, oily-haired, voluble Thespian, who was constantly acting—both on and off the stage. He was shaved to the bone and there was a suspicion of perfume about his person and of masquerade about his long eyelashes that dropped soulfully when he conversed with one of the opposite sex. "Every move a picture!" as Jack summed him up. In short, Montague Summers was a handsome, conceited ass of the lounge-lizard variety and he at once set about the task of adding the ravishing Helene to his conquests.

Basking happily in the reflected glory of Summers, Aubrey informed me that the star was married to an enormously wealthy woman, many years his senior, and that she was pitifully jealous of his mash notes and the actresses with whom he played passionate scenes. Mrs. Summers, explained Aubrey loftily, "didn't understand" her talented husband; their souls were not *en rapport*. He was an artiste, she was of the materialistic bourgeoisie. Their temperaments grated, et cetera, *ad nauseum*. I strongly suspected Summers of moral turpitude and I was quite sure that Aubrey was merely repeating this philanderer's lines to those susceptible females who hovered moth-like about him.

It was with difficulty that I kept my head and refrained from knocking the strutting Summers down, so insistent were his attentions



to Helene. But the irrepressible Jack improved the opportunity of his acquaintance with Summers and his affluent wife by selling the latter a subdivision of land for father. This so delighted my progenitor that he advanced Helene enough money to open a very smart beauty parlor in Miami and he presented Jack with a handsome commission—which that master mind gambled away overnight.

Mrs. Summers became a daily patron of Helene's shop, as did her husband—unknown to his wife. Under Helene's skilful guidance, her operators administered to them hair tinting, face packs, manicures, face steamings, scalp treatments, massages, eyebrow pluckings, "permanent" waves (guaranteed to last three months), et cetera. I happened to be present on the opening day when Helene was instructing her comely priestesses in the sacred rites of the beauty cult.

"Now, girls," said Helene, "I'm afraid you'll find this a good job if you play your cards right. About forty percent of your customers will be sheiks and most of them will have all kinds of plans how to kill a dull night. Just be yourselves and they'll keep in line. Don't ever let me catch you calling any of the lady patrons 'dearie,' 'girlie' or 'honey'—they're not your roommates, they're paying for your coffee and cakes. And remember, we have any kind of beauty clay they ask for. We get it in bulk and it's all the same, you know, only put up under different labels for retail.

"When a customer muffs the right pronunciation of some French perfume, don't correct her with a pitying grin on your face, call it whatever she called it—you're here to sell, not to spell. If a lady wishes her hair tinted yellow, don't tell her black is a better shade for her. Give her what she wants and she'll be back in a week for a color that becomes her. In that way, we may get her a dozen times. When someone wants to smell a perfume, don't shove the bottle up under her nose. Shake it up, wave the cork in the air to evaporate the alcohol and then let her smell the cork. Keep yourselves pretty, bright and well-groomed at all times. Bear in mind, girls, you're the chorus in the comedy that's staged in these booths daily."

Montague Summers persisted in trying to make an impression on Helene, who treated him with cold disdain.

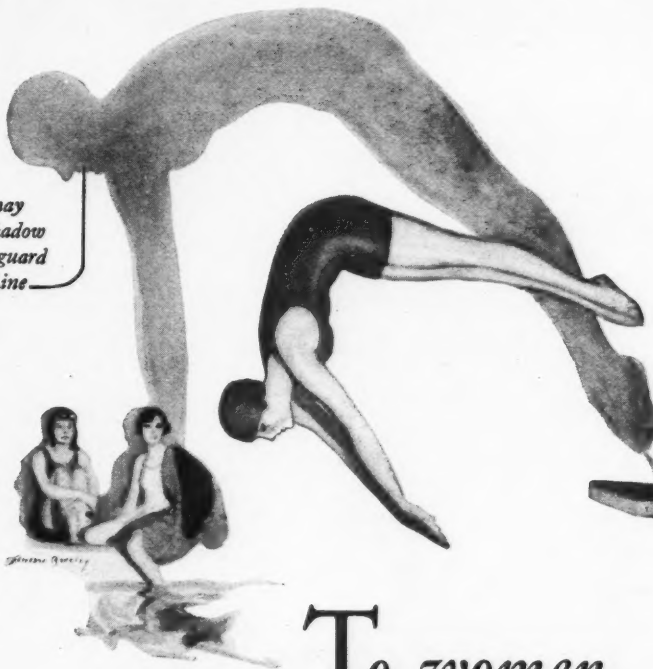
"I'll have you know that John's an awful bust!" she told me. "Did you ever see him laugh? He must have a thousand teeth, no kidding. And stingy? Say—he wouldn't tip his hat! All the girls duck him whenever he comes in here. The other day he squeezed my hand in the manicure booth and I shoved the orange stick two miles under his nail. He yelled murder and says, 'But I am Montague Summers!' I just grinned at him, 'That explains your not being a gentleman, but it don't excuse it!' He was fit to be tied. Montague may be the apple of his wife's eye, but he's just apple sauce to me!"

Helene's handsomely appointed beauty parlor soon became the vogue and she prospered accordingly, as did her brother Jack and myself. To father's keen delight we were both developing into a pair of high-powered real estate salesmen, but Jack continued to accept vermin exterminating contracts on the side. "Well, Well, Wilhelmina!" took the town by storm, though father vehemently objected to my use of the word "storm" in connection with his beloved Miami.

One glorious morning we went bathing in Biscayne Bay, with the entire company of the musical comedy. There was no omen of the baroque farce that was to occur, as we piled out of our motors and ran to the beach like children at recess. Jack, the lady-killer, had attached himself to a congenial beauty of the ensemble, while the other delectable choristers in bathing suits that displayed their—utter indifference to Puritanical criticism, surrounded father. My jovial sire romped and capered about with these sirens, to their delight and my embarrassment.

Montague Summers followed Helene about

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become a shadow  
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this several years ago. Upon the advice of prominent dental authorities, they developed a dental cream that not only cleans perfectly . . . but that also protects the teeth and gums against dangerous acids.

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Physicians and dentists long have recognized that Milk of Magnesia is the most effective of all products for neutralizing those acids which attack the teeth and the gums. Squibb's Dental Cream contains more than 50 per cent of this safe, pleasant antacid—enough to neutralize all mouth acids *with perfect safety*.

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**DENTAL CREAM**  
*Contains over fifty per cent of*  
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the sands like a pet dog, ogling her daringly clad figure until I longed to choke him, and I verily believe I would have if she had not escaped him by swimming out to the diving raft. A mediocre swimmer and not particularly courageous, the chagrined actor was unable to follow in the deep water, which was a familiar element to Helene, Jack and myself. I felt very sorry for the middle-aged Mrs. Summers, whom I met that morning, and whose pain at her inflated husband's crude flirtations was pathetically obvious.

An aviator was giving exhibition flights over the bay for a trivial fee, and, father as usual leading the way, most of us went up for the exhilarating ride. Summers, however, appeared anything but eager to fly.

"It would be unfair to Mr. Justin," he declared magnanimously. "If an accident should occur and I should be unable to appear at this evening's performance, the audience would demand their money back."

"Huh!" muttered Jack to me. "If I could buy that egg for what he's actually worth to your old man's frolic and sell him for what he thinks he's worth, I'd make a fortune!"

Helene looked briefly at Summers and sniffed a bit contemptuously. Father seemed to be enjoying his star's exhibition of faint-heartedness.

"Oh, go on up, Summers!" he chaffed. "You—eh—look down on most people as it is—in an airplane you can look down on everybody! And I doubt if an accident would be a blow at the box-office. On the contrary, it would get us more publicity than Helen Wilks."

Though the faithful Aubrey stood aloof and glared reprovingly at us all, others took up the bantering, and thus tormented, the unfortunate Summers was induced to make a flight. Alas! Who may divine the sardonic gestures of that slapstick comedian Fate?

Jack had found much in common with the aviator, a young, devil-may-care sort of chap who had been scornfully amused at the actor's unwillingness to fly. So, as instructed by Helene's mischievous brother, the pilot proceeded to give Summers a thrill. He succeeded beyond Jack's wildest hopes!

After a bewildering series of loops, barrel rolls, falling leaves, Immelman turns, nose-dives, tail spins and other breath-taking stunts, the plane roared so close above our heads that the girls shrieked in panic and we all involuntarily ducked. When we looked up again, the plane was wildly plowing the sands of the beach and even as we stared with nerve-tingling premonition of disaster, it crashed with a sickening impact into a pier.

"I asked that clown to give Summers a kick!" exclaimed Jack. "That's service, what?"

Horried, we ran madly toward the wreck, already surrounded by an excited crowd of bathers and promenaders. A cloud of sandy dust arose from the splintered ruins and as we fearfully elbowed our way through the chattering jam we were abruptly confronted by the aviator. He was disheveled and limping, but apparently much more angry than hurt.

"That big fathead got scared stiff and pulled the controls!" he snarled. "He cracked up my ship and—"

"Where is Summers?" we chorused.

"He's up to his ears in sand under the pier," returned the scowling aviator. "Leave him there till I can get a sledge and pat him down further. Gimme a cigaret!"

While an ambulance clanged up to the scene, the dazed and bedraggled Montague Summers was excavated from what had almost been his grave on the beach. The surgeon found no bones broken, though much skin had been scraped from various parts of the actor's anatomy and his superiority complex was practically a total loss. But a terrible catastrophe had befallen him. His magnificent Roman nose—the *pièce de résistance* of his beautiful profile—was smashed to a spongy, grotesque mass. Once a double for Valentino, Montague Summers had in a twinkling acquired the appearance of a tenth-rate pugilist

and his career as both a *matinée* idol and a heart-breaker off stage was apparently at an end.

"He looks like a cartoon!" murmured Jack, shaking his head. "That smeller of his will have to be vulcanized or somethin'. Sis, I'll stat' it's a tough breeze which blows nobody some *gelt*. There's a job for you!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Helene. "You're a beauty shark, ain't you?" said Jack. "Well, rush over and give Summers your card! That lad's hot right now to proposition about havin' his pan retreated. Snap into it and get that business—alley up!"

"Oh, act your age!" retorted Helene. "I'm going to devote a lot of time to keeping away from Montague hereafter. It was all our fault for riding him into taking that trip."

While we were discussing the accident somewhat guiltily, I thought it odd that Mrs. Summers seemed not a whit upset by the circumstance that her once handsome husband's features were now terribly marred. I looked for hysterics, but she was the calmest of us all and with a bright smile and a wave of the hand she drove off after the ambulance, perfectly composed. I did not guess the reason for her equanimity until her message to Helene some weeks later, after Montague Summers had been buffooned to theatrical oblivion for all time.

An understudy stepped into the leading rôle of "Well, Well, Wilhelmina!" Summers languishing in the hospital, where we all visited him, feeling more or less responsible for his misfortune. He was anything but gracious to us and so ill-tempered with the attendants that he had difficulty in retaining nurses. However, Helene was touched by his predicament and being acquainted with the marvels of modern plastic surgery she persuaded Summers to have a specialist in that profession reconstruct his shapeless proboscis. The injured member had been set in the hospital, but the sculpturing was so amateurish that the result was a cruel travesty on a nose. Summers, who had shattered a mirror with a howl of dismay after his first glance at his face, commissioned Helene to arrange for the plastic operation. It was then that the implacable gods of vengeance turned their attention to him!

The surgeon was obtained and was enthusiastic when he heard the name of his distinguished patient. In fact, he impressed me unfavorably as being a bit overeager to take the case for a practitioner of efficiency and standing. He appeared not at all interested in his fee, rather disgusting me with his obsequious bowing and scraping in the presence of the egotistical star.

But the operation removed whatever doubts any of us had as to the doctor's skill and left us almost breathless with admiration for his art. As Jack succinctly put it, "He knew his oil!" The nose of Montague Summers was now a noble edifice indeed and far exceeded the beauty of the original organ. Once more Summers was the handsome cavalier and within a short time he was back in the cast of "Well, Well, Wilhelmina!" causing the fair sex to sigh ecstatically as of yore.

One exceedingly hot evening, Helene, Jack and myself dropped in on the show to see Aubrey's latest dance creation. A coincidence caused our seats to adjoin that of the surgeon who had made Summers' nose a thing of beauty. We exchanged polite greetings and conventional comment on the excessive heat.

"Still, it ain't keepin' the natives away," said Jack, wiping his perspiring brow and gazing about the packed theater. "Look at the mob in this trap!"

"It is this way every night," volunteered the doctor, and then noting our inquiring glances, he added, "I have not missed a single performance since Montague Summers resumed his rôle."

"Well, what a glutton for punishment you are!" exclaimed Jack. "If that bozo's a actor, I'm the rightful King of Siam!"

"It is not entirely the gentleman's acting

that I admire," smiled the surgeon. "You see, the remodeling I accomplished upon Mr. Summers' nose is my most successful work and I like to gaze on my masterpiece."

"You're sure it isn't some blond masterpiece in the chorus that you like to gaze on, doctor?" teased Helene, with a laugh.

"I have long since graduated from the callow class, fair lady," he returned easily.

"More's the pity!" persisted Helene. "You know, all the world loves a lover!"

"Except the people outside the phone booth waitin' to get a number themselves," sneered the cynical Jack.

"When are you thinking of getting married, brother?" asked his sister quizzically.

"Continually!" answered Jack promptly. "I'm gettin' sick of workin'."

The rise of the curtain ended what promised to be an interesting discussion.

The heat in the closely packed theater was rapidly becoming unbearable. Really, I was reminded of the steam-room in a Turkish bath. Several women left the audience for air. Then, like a thunderbolt, came a fearful dénouement!

On the stage, Montague Summers was making desperate love to the heroine when in the midst of his most impassioned utterance the entire audience burst into uproarious guffaws. The leading woman herself battled futilely with an attack of hysteria and then, covering her face with her hands, she turned her back to the footlights, choking with laughter. Red-faced and bulging-eyed, the astounded and enraged Summers nervously touched his nose and set the house off into a fresh outburst of unholy glee. Suddenly we saw the reason for the general merriment. Summers now resembled an exaggerated Cyrano de Bergerac. His nose was swollen to an enormous, shapeless mass, and, each time he touched it, it turned left, right, downward or upward. It was a monstrosity—the organ of a gargoyles; and when it slowly began to melt like hot butter the audience simply fell into the aisles.

Grasping his fantastic nose with both hands as if fearful of its complete disintegration, Summers rushed wildly from the stage as the curtain fell with a thump on a gale of laughter.

When we had recovered some measure of poise, we stole fearful glances at our plastic surgeon, whose *magnum opus* had literally collapsed before his eyes. To our amazement, he was smiling cheerily.

"The fates have been kind," he said quietly. "The Lord delivered my enemy into my hands and I have accomplished my purpose!"

We were speechless and Helene pinched Jack's arm to stop his half-formed ejaculation. The doctor reached under the seat for his hat.

"So that you will not think me a bungler at my profession, I will explain," he said. "I am a cousin of a girl this cad Summers cast off to marry the wealth of the unfortunate woman who is his wife. I had sworn to even accounts—there were circumstances that are not necessary to detail. Well, the family honor is satisfied! I have publicly humiliated my cousin's betrayer and made him the laughing-stock of the theatrical world. I have assassinated Montague Summers through searing his only vulnerable point—his egotism. When this reaches Broadway, Mr. Summers, I imagine, will be about finished as a star!"

"But what did you do to his nose?" exclaimed Helene. "It—it—why, it just seemed to melt right off his face!"

"Exactly!" said the avenger, with satisfaction. "I injected paraffin under the skin to fill out the cavity caused by the accident. As I anticipated and made certain of through the introduction of certain solubles, the paraffin succumbed to the intense heat of the theater."

We never saw Montague Summers again. He made a hasty exit from Miami, but before she left, his elderly wife sent a card to Helene. Scribbled on the reverse was the following:

"Waste no sympathy. I am glad it happened, for now Montague must perform abandon both the stage and his illegal amours and devote some time to me!"



## Wolf's Clothing (Continued from page 67)

to the Bennings, my insolent clerk would have told me that my wife had telephoned me. Either trust completely, or not at all. Some wiser man than I had uttered this sage advice long ago, but I, in my arrogant certainty that I knew human nature, had disdained the counsel.

I was at the hospital in ten minutes, to learn that there were visitors' hours, and that these were strictly observed. In three hours I might be admitted to the ward where Minnie lay.

But one whose path had wound through the devious ways mine had, is not to be dismissed by a tale of rules and regulations. As cash will unlock doors, so it will nullify rules. I parted with a ten-dollar bill and was led to Minnie's room.

She was in a public ward, screened from general observation, but able to hear the moans of unfortunate ones more badly hurt than she was. She grinned at sight of me.

"But why weren't you here sooner?" she demanded. "They phoned the Bennings for me—you thought I'd run out on you," she accused me.

"Which just goes to prove what a rotten thing I am," I said.

She reached for me; her tough little hand gripped mine. "You're a swell guy, Berry Baline," she whispered, "and I'm for you. Was it in the paper?"

I nodded, on the verge of tears. I'd thought her a crook like myself, and she told me that I was a "swell guy."

"Hurt?" I asked.

The attendant who had fetched me to her had said that she would be all right in a short time; merely bruised and shaken up.

"Nope. A little bit woozy, but that's all. But gee, what a swaggen time you been havin'—not. Thinkin' I'd blown the burg—what's happened, anyway?"

Whispering, lest idly listening ears be rendered curious by a chance word, I told her of my night's adventures. Her bright blue eyes twinkled.

"Maybe," she suggested, "they went to the Bennings, too. And maybe, going later than you, and pumping the night clerk, they found that you asked for Mrs. Parker, and found out where I was."

She beat me to the thought; I suppose it would have occurred to me later, but—she thought of it first. Not merely truer than I, but quicker of mind, was Minnie Humphrey. "There's been no one here?" I swiftly inquired.

She shook her head. "Not that I know of—but that don't mean nothin'. Layin' around outside, waitin' for you—or me to breeze out—that would be their play."

"The necklace," I whispered.

"Think I gave it up to the nurse or doctor? Fat chance," she laughed. "I wasn't unconscious or anything like that. I let 'em look me over—it ain't often the docs get a chance to see a shape like mine—but I hung onto my hand-bag all the time. It's right under the old pillow now, and if you'll reach under—"

I did and drew forth the hand-bag. I opened it and took out the package which had led to all sorts of crime already and might lead to worse, even, before it was restored to its rightful owner.

I stuffed a handful of bills into the bag. "I'll tell them to furnish you a room to yourself, Minnie," I said. "There's plenty of money in your bag—"

"Say, I'm goin' to get out of here today," she stated. "I'm lame, but you don't stay in a hospital for that."

"But shock," I suggested.

"Shock me eye! I ain't no delicate flower. I'm a weed, I am, and weeds thrive where violets die. But where'm I going to see you, Berry?"

I shrugged. "The Lord only knows, Minnie."

"But this ain't the finish, bo," she said. "You'll need me—plenty. Unless you think

that Rose dame is all the help you need." "Help?" I laughed bitterly. "How can she help me? They've got her—"

"And she'll prob'ly never break loose by herself," said Minnie, with a scorn that seemed uncalled for. "But say, Berry, you *will* need me. You gotta get a hangout; you know that. I'll get it for you—at that, if you was afraid to go outdoors, I could cook a swell meal. I certainly swing a mean frying-pan, Berry."

I could use her aid; of that there was no doubt. But even now, for all I knew, she was marked by the gang. What right had I to drag her into danger—and danger, alas, not merely from unscrupulous criminals, but from the police?

I explained all this to her, and she laughed at me. "Berry," she said, "you gave me a thrill when you handed me dough without asking something from me. Then you gave me a great kick when you stuck two million dollars' worth of ice in my mitt and sent me on my way. Now, when I've touched the high spots, you want me to go back to Boston and holler, 'Cash.' Say, don't I deserve better than that?"

"You do," I assured her. "And—you never can tell what will turn up. Minnie, when you leave here today, do you suppose you could find a place where you could live—and find it without anyone knowing where you went?"

She grinned at me. "Say, there's only one thing I got in New York, but that's the entry to a coupla motion-pitcher studios. I can blow into one of them dumps, and I know one that's got five exits. If I ain't the biggest tramp in the world I oughta be able to slip anyone that follows me."

I nodded. I thought she could do it. Anyway, she could try it.

"All right," I said. "Then go to the Welland Hotel on Washington Square. Register for us both—better call yourself—"

"Murphy—that's my middle name," she interjected. "I'll do it, and wait for Mr. Murphy to show up."

"And before I come I'll phone, and you can tell me for sure whether anyone followed you." "I'll know," she said with quiet certainty. And I believed her. This shrewd little girl might never make her fortune in motion-pictures, but wit doesn't show on the screen.

I bade her good-by, telling her what a trump she was, and she grinned gaily at me. Then I left the hospital.

I was prepared for what I found. There were three taxis waiting outside, and I could guess, without any great mental strain, that one of them at least contained adherents of the Chief.

There could be no doubt about it. The gang knew, unquestionably, that I'd gone to the Bennings. They had learned for whom I inquired. Doubtless they had also learned of Minnie's phone message to the Bennings. I could be absolutely certain of this. The Chief could not be the great criminal he unquestionably was if my reasoning was false. And I had no doubt of the venomous-voiced man's ability.

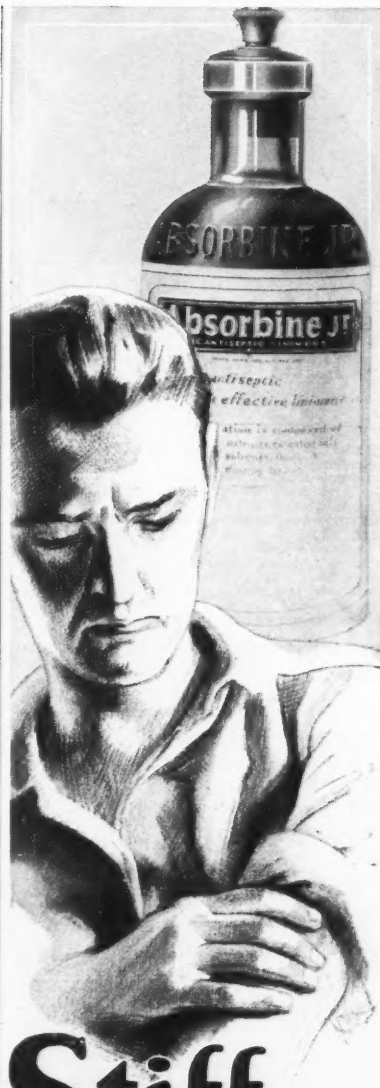
So, then, equipped for flight or pursuit as the occasion might arise, his men would wait outside the hospital for me to call. Of course, I might not find out where Minnie was, but in that case they'd wait outside for Minnie to appear. And they'd probably have found ways of knowing who Minnie was when she did emerge from the hospital.

The first taxicab was vacant, and I stepped into it.

"Take me," I ordered the driver, "to the Winner."

This by way of giving him some place to drive to, whilst I collected my wits, thought my way out of the emergency. The man drove south and started through Central Park. Sisters' Hospital is on 116th Street.

I knocked on the window, and the man leaned around, opening the door. "Not



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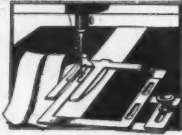
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Address.....

Check Shade of Powder.

through the Park," I said, "but down Fifth Avenue."

I could too easily foresee what would happen if we entered the Park. A taxi would force us against the curb, to a stop; armed men would leap forth. Berry Baline might not die, but he would certainly lose the necklace, which had come to make life worth living.

But on Fifth Avenue, where there was more traffic, less chance for the violently disposed to escape, I would be safer. Glancing back through the rear window, I saw that my suspicions had been correct. A machine just behind, one of the taxis that had been standing outside the hospital, swerved away from the Park entrance just as my machine had done. And it seemed to me that I recognized, sunk far back in the recesses of the taxi, my stout friend of yesterday and the Plaza.

What to do—and how to do it, if there were anything to be done? Of course, I had this advantage—my pursuers were no more anxious to attract the attention of the police than I was. Overt violence would be avoided by them as long as they thought it possible to abstain from the use of force.

But I couldn't taxi through crowded streets all day long. If an issue confronts me, I want to get it over with at once. And I saw the Chief's point—if his men took the necklace from me, his word was voided. The ethical side of it would not interest him. He would keep his word because of a colossal vanity more than because of any sense of honor; but only the letter of his word, not its spirit, would be adhered to by him.

A cross-town street was reached by us just as the whistle was blown by the traffic cop. We edged across, but I saw the bulky patrolman order the pursuing car back. Instantly two men emerged from the machine and began dodging through the east-bound cars toward me. They were not taking the chance that I'd elude them as I'd done yesterday when I left the Plaza.

I'd been correct in my recognition, too, for one of them was my fat friend, and the other was the short, squat man of the room in the Winner.

I looked about me; I feared no open violence, but—one never can tell. Directly beside me was a limousine; its side windows were open, and upon its comfortable tonneau cushions sat a most dignified gentleman, a gentleman of side-whiskers, of curved paunch, of silk hat, of heavy jowls that gleamed beneath his whiskers as though burnished. I recognized him instantly as ex-Senator Parsons, the owner of the Sentinel. The whole world knows him by his photographs.

I leaned toward him. "Want the biggest story of the day, Senator?" I asked.

He stared at me. "Of course," he said.

I tossed my precious package into his lap. "Don't open it," I said, "and I'll give you the story—some time before night."

What a grand old bird he was! He simply nodded, then never looked my way again. And my two followers had not seen what I did—I was sure of that.

It may be said that I was taking a chance, and the statement would be perfectly true. But when one has taken a dozen chances, another risk becomes a minor matter. But it must be remembered that the two men who followed me, who had run through the cross-town traffic lest my taxi get a head start, were men not averse to taking chances themselves. Also, like all persons who season their criminality with violence, they must lack patience.

The crafty confidence man will lay his plans months ahead, will proceed with sly caution to the execution of his designs, but not so your bandit. True, the latter will stalk his prey, but only a brief distance. Impatient, he strikes.

Now, these two men had had acumen enough—or the Chief had; it made no particular difference which—to reason that I would call upon the injured girl at the Sisters' Hospital. Their reasoning would have carried them a considerable distance along the road of truth.

Knowing that I had landed in New York only yesterday, that I was a lone worker who had no friends and few acquaintances, they would be certain that any person in whom I showed the slightest interest was the one possible person who could possess the necklace. It was all too obvious. I had gone to fetch the necklace in fulfillment of my treaty with the Chief. I had gone to the Bennings and then been unable to make good my promise. This morning I had called at the hospital. Putting two and two together was a mathematical feat as compared with this simple process.

Now, then, I had the necklace in my possession. The two men trailing me would take the first opportunity to remove the loot from my possession. They had had two experiences yesterday of my ability to throw pursuers off the trail. They would not give me any opportunity to exercise that ability again. Deterred they might be by the presence of uniformed policemen, but even that would simply make them hesitate; they would not stop.

I have said that I feared no open violence, but that I tossed the necklace to Parsons because I was taking no chances. Well, I did the impatience of my stout friend and his squat companion scant justice. For they came to my taxi, one on either side, and opened the doors simultaneously.

"You get your wish of last night," said the fat man. "Here come I."

An amiable soul under different circumstances, I conceded. One of those who will kill, but laugh as he does so. The most dangerous kind of all, I think. He would rather not kill, but after all, he was in a profession that demanded certain things, and he would not fail those demands.

I grinned back at him. "So I do. You've caught me. Well, well, having cornered the bear, what next?"

The squat man had crowded into the taxi, too. My driver glanced over his shoulder, a scowl of bewilderment on his forehead.

"Pals of your'n?" he asked. He read the papers, evidently, and knew that New York was a place of strange occurrences.

"Oh, yes," I said, and the driver twisted back to his front-face position.

Out of the tail of my eye I glanced toward the limousine that held Senator Parsons. Have I remarked that he was a grand old bird? I repeat it. Not a move did he make; he didn't even glance our way, although the entrance of two men into my machine, so shortly after I had tossed him a package, must have made him burn with curiosity.

"Put your gun back in your pocket," I said to the stout man. "My ribs are tender."

"Come across," he replied.

I laughed at him. "If I had the necklace, my large friend, do you think you'd ever have entered this machine?"

His jaw dropped. Such a parry had not occurred to him. And now I was doubly glad that, unwilling to chance their sense of caution, I had taken what seemed as daring—though different—a chance in tossing the package to the highly respectable ex-Senator.

For the thing I had really not thought my pursuers would dare to do, the thing of violence, was exactly the thing they had planned to do. Right here, in an open taxicab in the middle of Fifth Avenue, they were ready to kill if need be. And at that, it was not such a brainless thing as might be imagined. Confusion is a crook's best aid. How many killers who commit their crimes in public places are ever apprehended? It is the murderer who lays plans and who slays in secluded spots who is always arrested. The street killer escapes in the crowd. And the bigger the crowd the more witnesses there are to point in different directions and say the murderers fled that way, or this way.

A sixth sense had told me to get rid of the necklace, although I had not realized this, but thought I had done a deliberate thing. I wonder how many deliberate things we really do. Perhaps not any.

But now that I managed to laugh at the

disney on my fat companion's countenance, the laugh was of the brain, not of the heart. For I realized that I had escaped death—if I had—by a hair's breadth.

"Don't kid me," he growled.

"Search me. Feel all over me," I retorted. "You boys," and I jeered, "seem to think you're dealing with a gifted amateur, instead of Berry Baline."

"Why did you call on that dame in the hospital?" he asked.

I could follow his mental processes. If I hadn't the necklace—and his hands, and those of the squat man, had run over my body with the practised efficiency of a detective—then it must still be in the possession of Minnie Humphrey, or Parker, as they knew her.

I didn't want Minnie annoyed, if so mild a word as annoyance could describe what action they might take toward her.

"To get the necklace from her," I replied.

The squat man spoke for the first time. "You ain't been anywhere, ain't talked to anyone—"

I spoke to the other man. "I wish," I said, "that you would explain to your little chum who and what Berry Baline is. It will make him realize that things incomprehensible to his immature mind are matter-of-fact affairs to me."

The fat man ordered me to stand up. The barriers had been released now, and our car was moving ahead. I glanced at the Senator's limousine. What a man! Not a backward glance toward us. I marveled at the fat-witted public that had defeated him in his recent campaign for reelection. Well, he had too many brains for a politician. And he had humor, too. No one lacking humor could have responded to a play as quickly as he had done.

Four hands swept the floor of the cab, searched under the cushions, patted the leather-padded backs and sides of the car. Then the fat man looked at me.

"Either you're lying about the dame in the hospital or—you're too slick to be true."

"Would I be fool enough to let the girl keep it? You folks would take it from her as easily as I took it from you."

The fat man glowered at the jeer. "You had a bit of luck, Baline."

"Luck?" I was airy. "It takes brains to recognize luck and seize upon it."

"Then the girl ain't got it?" he demanded.

"Don't ask me; ask yourself if I seem that kind of a fool," I countered.

I felt perfectly safe now. For the necklace they'd kill; Berry Baline dead might mean the end of all their hope of reacquiring the diamonds whose first acquisition had cost so much in the way of planning and organizing.

"Well, we got you, anyway," said the larger of my captors. "And you ain't going to leave us until—"

"Listen, my friend," I said patiently. "I'm not a six-year-old, to be kidnaped in broad daylight. Suppose I yell once. Get the point?"

He got it, of course; his huge body sank back into the taxi. What strange ways we have of expressing emotion! Nearly all people sag, droop, when confronted with an insurmountable obstacle.

I pursued my slight advantage. "I want to talk to my amiable friend, the Chief," I said. Leaning forward, I tapped the chauffeur on the shoulder. "Let us out at the next corner," I ordered.

The man turned the wheel and we swerved in to the curb.

"Ninety cents, boss," he said.

We alighted and I paid him. I led the way into a cigar store on a corner. Incongruously, I thought of the Avenue's vanished glories. Cigar stores, cheap restaurants, stocking sales; where once had been dignified mansions, dining-rooms where the fashion of two continents met and discussed its mallard duck, its venison, its Château Yquem. Even I, a dozen years before, had come down from a college not a thousand miles away and ridden in a

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carriage behind two liveried men. Well, the Avenue had changed, but so had Berry Baline. To restore the Avenue meant tearing down new buildings; to restore Berry Baline . . . What difference did it make? Escorted by two gangsters, I entered the cigar store.

"Where can I reach the Chief?" I demanded. "I'll get the number," said the fat man.

He entered a booth and closed the door tightly upon himself. The squat man edged closer to me. I laughed at him.

"I'm not running away," I assured him. "And if I chose to, I'd take your gun away and slap you with it."

"Try it," he suggested.

I nodded thoughtfully. "Thank you. I promise, on the word of Berry Baline, that some day I'll do that very thing. Give me just a little time—"

"I'll always be hangin' around," he said. "Fair enough; spoken like a man of parts," I complimented him. "Well?" I said to the other man as he opened the booth door.

"Take the phone," he said curtly.

"The Chief?" I asked of the receiver.

His venomous voice came back to me. "You hold good cards, Berry Baline," he said.

"Why be niggardly with your compliments?" I jered. "Say that I hold poor cards but play them well. And by the way, it irks me, as a superior person, as one who has outwitted you on several occasions, to refer to you as the Chief."

"Petty pride, petty pride," he murmured. "Still, I get the point. I am Mr. Candish, Mr. Baline."

"Delighted, I'm sure," I said. "And your fat friend who listens as I speak?"

"Mr. Josephs, known to his intimates, because of his paunch, as the Alderman."

"Charmed," I said. "And the gorilla who accompanies him?"

"Inexcusable of me to have failed in these introductions, Mr. Baline," purred Candish. "That is Vanelli, sometimes termed by the ribald Spaghet'."

"Well, will you tell the Alderman and Spaghet' to meander in directions directly opposite to the one I take?" I requested.

"You ask a great deal, Mr. Baline," he objected.

"I only ask that you keep your word, Mr. Candish. You have broken it. Your men tried to take the necklace from me—"

"An inexcusable presumption on their part, I assure you," he interrupted. "You still have several hours left of the twelve accorded you. They were to follow you and see that you kept your word, but were to commit no overt act."

Oddly enough, I believed him. Not merely because his voice sounded suddenly sincere, but because Rose had vouched for him.

"Let it go at that," I said. "But—because I mistrusted them—"

"I am no longer at the Winsor, Mr. Baline. They were to tell you where to find me—to take you to me."

"But, distrusting their meek and amiable intentions, I got rid of the necklace again, Mr. Candish," I said. "So—I may need an extension of time."

"Cheerfully granted, Mr. Baline. Of course, the lady is uncomfortable; it has been necessary to—er—restrain her—"

"It goes in the memory book," I warned him.

"The little book of debits, eh? I fear you will do no collecting, Mr. Baline."

"You won't mind my thinking that I shall, though?" My voice, I think, was almost as silky as his own. "It will cheer my darker moments if I may dwell on the payment I intend to exact from you."

"We all have our little pastimes, our trifling idiosyncrasies, Mr. Baline. Why should I interfere with yours? You want some extra time."

"It is now almost nine," I said. "I have five hours according to our first agreement—"

"And I give you twenty-four more," he said. "I doubt I'll need anything like that," I said.

"But—er—unfortunately, I cannot see you

today—unless you can give me the necklace within an hour. If you can—ring me up at Butterfield 707071. If not—ring me tomorrow at that number."

"Pressing business?" I sneered.

"Extremely," he replied.

"But Miss—Rose?" I suggested.

"I'm sorry about her. I shall make things as easy for her as possible, under all the circumstances. Within an hour, then—or not until tomorrow. May I consult with Josephs?"

I backed out of the booth and handed the receiver to the Alderman. He took it, put it to his ear and listened a moment. Then he hung up and emerged from the little closet.

"Chief says to lay off you," he growled.

I looked dismay. "And I'm to be deprived of your delightful companionship, Mr. Josephs?"

"You'll get plenty of it yet," he said grimly. "That," I told him, "brightens my whole day."

He could find no retort, but merely scowled. "Then I must bid you both good morning," I said.

"Wait a minute, Baline," said Josephs. "The Chief—he just said he didn't like to mention it himself—said it was a delicacy you'd comprehend—damfino what he's driving at—but he says you can train with us, if you like. He said the terms would be o. k. and all that."

"Tell the Chief," I smiled, "that I appreciate his delicacy. It well becomes so great a soul. Sordid, crass commercialism, when necessary between gentlemen, should be discussed by underlings. Tell him that some day, in the course of twenty or thirty years, maybe—mind, this is no binding promise—I may send my secretary to treat with him. In the meantime, convey him my compliments and regrets. Now will you two gentlemen—you won't mind my calling you gentlemen? You know I'm joking? Very well, then, it's all right. Will you two cross the street and keep on going due west for the next few minutes?"

"A guy's an awful sucker to get funny just because he's sitting pretty for a minute," said Vanelli. "Myself, I'd like to bump you off now and git it over with."

I nodded appreciatively. "I understand. Why postpone mussy details? It will be one of my great moments when I permit you to make the attempt, Spaghet'. But just now, a truce being declared—"

I stood on the corner of the Avenue as they crossed the street. I watched them until they had disappeared in the crowd. For the first time since I had left the Plaza yesterday noon I was absolutely convinced that I was not being followed as, on Madison Avenue, I hailed a taxi and ordered myself driven to the office of the Sentinel.

For the first half of my long ride down-town I spent the time wondering why on earth the Chief would not receive the necklace today unless I delivered the diamonds to him within the hour. One of the Candish sort is not likely to defer delivery to himself of two million dollars' worth of jewels. It was incomprehensible, incredible.

What could be more important to Candish than the recovery of the necklace? To acquire that necklace he must first have engineered a robbery in England, or elsewhere in Europe. Then there was the elaborate plan for smuggling it out of the country and into the United States. Men, money and time had been needed for all this. Moreover, only yesterday the Chief had shown a certain understandable anxiety about recovering the necklace.

Why, then, could he not receive it today, save within the next hour? One dismisses a matter of supreme importance only when it ceases to be supreme. But what could lessen or destroy the supremacy of this necklace in the eyes of Candish? I swear that, with all my imagination—and I hope I do not seem too boastful when I claim to have imagination—I could not think of anything more important, to a thief or leader of thieves, than the

recovery of the diamonds which I had brought across the ocean.

I knew enough of the profits of criminal adventure to understand that, despite the yellow journals, million-dollar "jobs" are extremely rare. I should have thought that Candish would have permitted nothing to interfere with the speedy delivery of the diamonds. I was, I admitted, facing something entirely new to my experience. And nothing that I had previously known of criminal organizations had prepared me to understand the workings of this one, or at least of the mind of its leader.

Also, during that first half of my ride (I had taken the taxicab because, despite my certainty that I was not followed, a taxi can be left when a subway train cannot be departed from, and I disliked the feeling of being trapped for even a moment) I thought of Rose. Indeed, my thoughts of Candish were inextricably intermingled with thoughts of her.

I felt that I had failed her. My judgment of character, in the instance of Minnie Humphrey, had not been at fault, yet—I had failed her. True, one could hardly be expected to foresee a taxicab collision, to guess that it had happened and ascertain instantly whether the victim had been conveyed. It would have required second sight for me to have got into touch with Minnie any sooner than I had done. Still, Rose had relied on me. The memory of her bruised mouth, the indignities to which she had been subjected, had never left me for a moment.

These indignities were still being inflicted upon her; Candish had intimidated as much over the telephone just now. These were through no fault of mine, but were through unforeseen accident to my plans. Nevertheless, I have contempt for people who fail in anything through accident, and I didn't spare myself contempt now.

I'd done a reckless thing when I handed Minnie the necklace last night; I had equaled its rashness in tossing it to Senator Parsons. True, had I clung to it, Spaghet' or the Alderman would have put a bullet into me and taken it from me. We might all have been arrested, and then—Candish had said last night that the waiter who had brought me Rose's warning note was dead. Had I not rid myself of the diamonds, Rose might have been killed by now. A brawl, my murder, or the arrest of myself and my attempted slayers, all would have brought about the same ending—Rose, a traitor to Candish, would have lost her value as a hostage whereby the necklace would be returned to the Chief, and so have lost her life.

I couldn't see what else, in any of the situations through which I had passed, I could have done. But perhaps that failure to see other ways out of my difficulties had been due to my stupidity. And if it were stupidity, then stupidity had jeopardized Rose.

Again and again I brushed away the beads of sweat that formed upon my forehead, and then, in desperation, I forced my mind away from contemplation of Candish's actions and Rose's predicament, to think of Parsons, the man on whom I was about to call.

The whole world knew of Eli Parsons; at least, it had heard a million rumors. A miner, he had acquired ownership of a mine, then a railroad had fallen into his lap, and steamships and ranches, and—in his early forties, a wife. The wife had died in three years, leaving a baby girl, and Parsons had moved East, away from the scenes of his triumphs, to New York.

He had purchased a newspaper and made it the most sensational success of the time, and had been elected to the Senate. A certain rough frankness had made him at first extremely popular; then it became known that he was "unsound"; in other words, Parsons didn't play with the right crowd. He was an independent and independents do not last long in politics in the East.

He looked like a well-fed banker and had the heart of a pirate; in his day he'd been a two-fisted man, and rumor credited him with at least one killing. Self-defense, but—a killing



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nevertheless. He had staked huge sums at roulette and *chemin-de-fer*; had bucked the stock-market and made another fortune; had been introduced to a king and snubbed the royal person the next day, and had frankly stated that royalty's attitude toward women offended him.

He had social position, though he jeopardized it a thousand times a year by his frankness. All in all, he was anything but what he looked. What he really was, might be in his heart of hearts, no one knew. And this was the man to whom I had tossed a two-million-dollar necklace which was not my property.

Well, he could do no more than have me arrested, but somehow I didn't think he would. For, though he had bought a paper when he was well along in middle life, journalism had become the apple of his eye, and a good story, if gossip were one percent true, meant more to him than anything else in the world, excepting, perhaps, his daughter.

I alighted at the Sentinel office; I felt in my pocket to see that my pistol was handy. I was not going to be arrested; if policemen awaited me, I'd tell them Candish's phone number, tell them of Rose, and then—well, better to be dead than a prisoner.

Mr. Parsons's office was on the ninth floor, I was informed. So I rode to that floor and inquired of the office girl for the publisher. She asked my name, and I borrowed paper and wrote a simple note to Parsons.

"I'm the man who tossed a package into your lap," I wrote.

In five minutes—it seemed that to me in my anxious frame of mind, but it was probably two minutes—an alert young man came out to greet me.

"Mr. Parsons did not come to the office," he said. "But he telephoned that if any gentleman called with reference to the incident described in this note of yours"—he tapped the message I'd sent in—"that he was to be directed to call upon Mr. Parsons at his house immediately."

He gave me the number of the Senator's house on West Sixty-third Street, and I descended in the elevator to take another taxi up-town. Again I wondered if policemen would be waiting for me. Probably the Senator had pulled the blinds of his car, examined the parcel—I didn't know, and in the mood I was in, hardly cared.

I felt sixty years old, filled with futility, as I rang the door-bell. What a tale I had to tell the Senator, and what chance was there of my being accorded credence? Well, I'd meet the situation as it might unfold itself. I tried to recover something of my usual nonchalance as a butler ushered me into his presence.

Parsons sat behind a table as sturdy as himself, in a swivel chair that was ponderous and comfortable. His curved paunch was creased by the table edge as he leaned forward; the silk hat was gone and a mop of white hair was visible. The hair had the curious quality of stiffness that usually accompanies youth. His heavy jowls seemed to have a determined set as though they were not flabby, but solid, hard.

"Well, young man, you like melodrama, I see," he greeted me.

"Sometimes melodrama is the only form of entertainment available," I told him.

"And if the play is successful one pays the speculator's fee, eh? Well, will you have it in cash? I suppose a check might seem dangerous to you."

I stared at him. "Have what in cash?"

"The reward, confound it, the reward! I play fair, young man. I keep my word. Instead of tossing it to me, you could have walked into my office—you thieves, though"—and how scornfully he uttered the words—"judging others by your crooked selves, wish to feel the way out first. Well, check or cash? Make up your mind quickly. You get off scot-free; the only person who ever beat Eli Parsons who can say as much. But don't hang around too long. Don't make me regret that I'm a fool. And that I'm compounding a felony. Which is it?"

Deliberately I pulled up a chair and sat down before him.

"Would you mind," I asked slowly, "telling me what you're talking about?"

"Why the farce?" he cried. "You tossed me the necklace. You—or some one else—telephoned and asked what I'd pay for its return. I said I'd give a hundred thousand. You rang off, but—evidently the price was right."

"You mean—the necklace belongs to you?" I gasped.

"To my daughter. It was her mother's. My daughter doesn't know of its existence. But she's twenty-one next month—I sent it to Amsterdam last winter to have the stones recut. It was stolen two months ago. Stolen, by the Lord, from one of my secretaries, after it had been delivered to my technically legal possession. Stolen in London. Anyone else would have put up a roar, but I—well, I don't like to be made a fool of. I'd rather lose the necklace. But what are we wasting time for? You, with your insolent question—asking me if I wanted a big story, you impertinent—"

"Senator," I interrupted, "will you listen to a tale? I promise that it will be interesting to you."

"Well," he said grudgingly, "begin it." There was no humor in those hard gray eyes that could, I knew, twinkle amiably on occasion.

"To begin with," I said, "my name is Berry Baline. I'm a professional thief."

"Of course," he said. "It must be very interesting at times."

"It is," I said dryly. "It grows more interesting, too. Less than two weeks ago, motoring across Dartmoor . . ."

No wonder he'd made a fortune, had been a great success. He could listen, and listening is the rarest gift in the world. He interrupted me rarely. His first word was when I told him of my determination to reform.

"That's encouraging," he said. "You didn't reform because of any high impulse, but because you suddenly found out that the police were cleverer than you thought, and were on your trail. Well, that sort of a reformation might be more permanent than the impulsive kind. Go on."

I continued with my tale; he rose from behind his table as I described the girl in the restaurant, muttered an ejaculation, then resumed his seat, ordering me to hurry on with my tale.

"That Humphrey girl is all right," he said later on. "Might find a job for her—hustle up."

I finished with today's procedure.

"You have nerve, I guess," he said. His forehead was wrinkled, and his mouth had widened and narrowed, hardened until it was almost vicious.

"If I have, I've needed it," I stated.

"That's not hard to see," he commented. He rose from behind the heavy table. "Well, young man, I can't see where you head in to get a reward from me. By a most amazing coincidence you return the jewels to their rightful owner. Those fellows that write about their Holmeses and Arsène Lupins and Raffesses, couldn't get a better twist to it. Sort of the bitter bitten. No—you get no reward."

"I don't want one; that should have been clear a long time ago," I said.

"Well, then, get out!" he ordered.

"But—don't you see," I argued. "The girl I told you about—the one called Rose—"

"Describe her again. Her clothes—everything," he commanded.

"Dark brown hair, almost black; clear gray eyes, widely set; broad mouth; very white teeth, not too small; green evening dress; black and white velvet and fur evening wrap—"

"That's enough," he interrupted. "Now—get out!"

My hand stole down to my side pocket. "But, you see," I began again, "that girl—got into trouble because of me. She may—die—if I don't return that necklace."

"And you want me to hand over two million

dollars in diamonds because a girl thief who's turned against her crowd—"

"Never mind whether she's a thief or not," I snarled.

"You sound as though you'd fallen in love with her," he jeered.

"By heavens, if I have, she'll never know it. I wouldn't soil her with my thoughts, if I could keep my thoughts from her," I told him.

"You *do* love her," he charged.

"None of your business, anyway," I cried. "But if you think I'm going to let her suffer—"

"Well, what can you do about it?" he jeered.

I was on my feet now; my automatic was out, and covering him. "Do?" I blazed. "I can start shooting this minute if you don't hand over the necklace."

"Here, here, wait," he begged. His whole body trembled as he reached into a drawer of the desk.

"No gun," I warned him.

"Gun?" he looked up at me. "Why, you fool, why should I draw a gun? Look around you!"

Involuntarily I did so. Two shutters in the walls at either side had slid back; two men were visible, each with a revolver.

"That's all right," I said, "I'll get you first—"

"I'm melodramatic myself," he interrupted.

"Have to be, these days. Cranks blow in here, want money—whereas you only want a necklace, eh?"

"Which I'm going to get," I stated. "If I don't, you'll never place it around your daughter's throat—be sure of that."

"I just about am, Berry Baline," he said.

"You're a hard citizen, a tough one or I never swung a pick. Well, look at this."

From his desk he drew, not the necklace, but a photograph. I stared at it. It was Rose, the girl of Candish's gang, the girl whom I had last seen bleeding from the bruises inflicted on her by Candish and his men, who was now a prisoner waiting for me to rescue her.

"Is that the girl of your restaurant, of your gang?" demanded Parsons.

I nodded. "Do you—do you know her?" I gasped.

He sank back heavily in his chair. "Baline, you and I are going to do business; you're a white man, thief or not. You get the necklace. But you're not leaving yet. Before you leave—we talk. We plan how to land this devil Candish—only, Baline, he belongs to me. Get that? I'll kill the man who kills Candish. He belongs to me."

"Do you know the girl?" I asked again.

"Know her?" He slowly shook his head.

"I love her—I adore her—but—what father really knows his daughter?"

*What is Rose Parsons doing involved with a gang of crooks? Baline learns the answer to that question, and with Minnie follows a dangerous trail—in Mr. Roche's Next Instalment*

## A Very Cool Million

(Continued from page 73)

she retorted. "But I suspect he has had more experience."

Richard let that pass. He was still striving to comprehend the change in her. A touch of powder on her nose, a dash of color perhaps not her own. Satin-shod feet and silk-sheathed knees, a short-skirted frock of the prevailing mode. With no more than this she had achieved an incredible result.

She smiled and startled him again.

"Don't you think that it's as much spiritual as sartorial, really?" she suggested. "How would you feel if you had to wear a cheap suit, an unspeakable hat and an ancient coat? Can you imagine how you'd feel? Well, I feel just the opposite—now." To that she added before



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he could answer, "Please sit down." And did so herself, careless, in the manner of the present generation, in the disposition of her skirt which no longer fell of its own volition below her knees.

"I know you are here under duress," she went on, "and I'll try to be brief. But I felt as if I must see you—be sure that you weren't resentful."

"Toward you?" he suggested.

"Oh, that wouldn't matter. I mean toward your aunt. That would be a tragedy. That is why I asked Pete to send you—so that I might try to make you understand how she felt toward you."

"Doesn't her will cover that?" he suggested.

"Not at all. Have you read your aunt's Bible as yet?"

"I've noticed several marked passages," he confessed.

"Then you have discovered, probably, that she had begun to think of her money as a curse. The idea tortured her. In one way, you see, she wanted you to have her money when she died. In another—she didn't. When she made her last will she had a premonition that she was dying. I did not believe it then but to help her—she was so terribly uncertain and bewildered—I made a suggestion."

She paused, as if giving him a chance to comment. He had none to make.

"A foolish suggestion, but she snatched at it," she resumed. "I had no idea, truly, that it would be final."

"As it seems to be," he contributed.

"You forget," she reminded him, "that although I am to receive the income I am supposed to administer it wisely and in accordance with her wishes. And there is still the letter she left, to be opened if I need further instructions."

"I should say that your instructions seem fairly definite. Money is a bad thing to have. As such it has been handed over to you."

"But perhaps it's not such a bad thing. What do I know about it?"

She rose abruptly, crossed to the mantel and produced cigarettes. "Pete left them—so I suppose they are good," she remarked, as he accepted one.

Then, to his astonishment, she herself placed one between her lips and struck a match. She coughed at the first puff and grimaced—but charmingly.

"Pete said smoking was an acquired taste—like olives," she observed. "I must say it seems rather more difficult!"

Richard hesitated. Then, "Is it required," he suggested, but with a smile that took the edge off the words, "by the terms of the will?"

"Precisely," she retorted. "It comes under the head of experimental research—things that you can do when you have money."

"One can do a lot of experimental research along that line," he conceded.

"I plan to," she announced calmly. "Money is still so new to me. You know my story so well."

"I am afraid you overrate my knowledge of your affairs."

"But I am such a familiar figure! In fiction, that is. The daughter of an Episcopal minister, retired with all too little to live on. With younger brothers who must be sent to college—do you begin to recognize me now?"

"I seem to have met you before—in fiction," he admitted.

"And so you can guess why I became half maid—half companion," she said. "It was not precisely the thing I might have chosen, yet—" She let the subject drop there, with a little shrug, and crushed her cigarette into an ash tray. "I'll practise in private," she explained. "I don't seem to be able to smoke decoratively, as yet."

Irrelevantly it occurred to him that Pete's infatuation was not hard to understand.

"Supposing," he suggested lightly, "that you find money is not such a bad thing to have. What then?"

Instead of answering him, she studied him for a second.

"You have changed," she announced. "Something has happened so that you do not mind not getting your aunt's money as much as you did . . . Oh, you did—who could help it? But you have found compensation of some sort."

Richard hesitated, then smiled. "As the daughter of an Episcopal minister," he retorted, "you may remember the Bible verse that begins 'Wisdom is good with an inheritance—'"

"And by it there is profit to them that see the sun," she finished. "But you did not get the inheritance."

"Yet I have seen the sun," he assured her, "and I think I can help others to. Isn't that what an inheritance is for, 'with wisdom'?"

"Don't you think it would be wiser for me to hold to the belief that money is the root of all evil—really a bad thing for anyone to have," she retorted, "and to expose myself to all manner of temptations? I plan to travel, anyway."

"That doesn't sound so very wicked," he assured her.

"Oh, it will be no Cook's tour," she announced. "I'm going to places like Biarritz, Monte Carlo and the Lido—don't the pictures of all-the-world there in its pajamas seem wicked to you, somehow?"

"Not particularly," he replied. "But then I'm not—"

"An Episcopal rector's daughter?" she suggested. "That is an awful handicap. Perhaps my inherited inhibitions will prove invincible. And yet—they may be only repressions that will welcome an outlet. Who knows but what with the assistance of some no-account count and a full moon, some night in Venice I may—astonish myself!"

Richard rose, in response to a nebulous impulse that later he decided was pure irritation. But at the moment he masked that under a creditable smile.

"Let my last word be worthy of Pete," he said. "I feel sure that no one will ever suspect you are the daughter of an Episcopal rector—with inhibitions."

"That sounds nice—or does it?" she murmured thoughtfully.

He did not enlarge upon it—to her. But as he strode down Boylston Street he assured himself that she was, plainly, just a scheming little adventuress who had seen a chance to get his aunt's money—and grabbed it.

And so, coldly, he informed Pete, when the latter demanded a report.

"Well—can you blame her?" retorted Pete placidly. "It must be a devil of a life, trotting around with a lot of self-centered, selfish old women. Of course I don't mean that your aunt, Ricky, was—"

"Let's drop the matter," suggested Richard austere.

Pete did so, for the moment. Yet he seemed to believe that Richard might be interested in Jean's further movements. Anyway he told him when she sailed from New York. And apparently he corresponded with her because he mentioned her whereabouts, from time to time.

London . . . Paris . . . Biarritz . . . Venice.

Then in July Pete himself abruptly announced that he was going abroad.

Richard did not miss him, as he might have another summer. Golf he had little time for these days. He was too busy. He took his usual month's vacation in August, but he passed up the cruise in a sporty little forty-footer to which he had been half committed. Instead, he and his car traversed New England. It was not, however, a pleasure trip though he looked extraordinarily fit when he returned to his desk.

This was in September. He found a letter from Pete enclosing a snap-shot. Of Pete and Jean. Taken on the Lido, both in gay pajamas. "Wish you were here," Pete had written, with great originality.

Richard doubted it as he put the snap-shot aside and went to the office of the head of the

firm, there to speak a little piece he had carefully phrased in his mind.

"But, my dear chap!" gasped the latter, when Richard had finished this. "I realize you have done very well these few months, of course, but even so, you are very young yet. It is possible that the firm, in time, might of its own volition invite you to become a member."

This Richard doubted. Mightily. The firm was one of the oldest and most conservative in Boston—which is saying much!

"I am, at the moment," he announced crisply, "trustee in every sense save the legal one, of estates aggregating twenty million dollars. I expect the number to grow until I have at least doubled that amount—"

"What!"

"And," Richard went on, "it is as apparent to me as it will be to you that I've come to the point where I must either become a member of this firm—or branch out on my own."

The desk at which the head sat overlooked the street. He glanced out through the window as he often did when digesting a problem.

A taxi stopped below. From it stepped a woman of sixty-five or so, squarely and squatly built. She wore a skirt that cleared the ground by an inch or two on one side, sagged an inch or two on the other. A washerwoman would have scorned the hat on her head; she wore a jacket of greenish black, with worn seams, of what had once been known as the Zouave pattern. Now, as always, that jacket sent the banker's memory back. His mother had worn such a jacket, very smart and new then, when he was a boy . . .

The squat, square figure was as familiar to him. Its possessor was well known in banking circles. She lived in an old-fashioned hotel and took her meals in a cafeteria. She was worth a cool, chilly, frozen two million! Anywhere save in New England she might have appeared an anachronism. But here she was typical of a still considerable, if slowly dying class.

The women into whose hands had passed the fortunes their men-folk piled up during the age when every stream in New England turned a mill-wheel, when the Old Colony was at its peak as a manufacturing center and a golden flood poured into it from every other section of a lousy, growing young nation. And, until the end of their days, the men handled the purse-strings. Their wives remained housewives, never taken into their husbands' confidence, never knowing what their incomes might be or what they could afford or not afford.

They, survivors of a feminine age of innocence in financial matters, were still scattered here and there over New England, accounted queer, living meager, often miserly lives. They existed, but to discover them against the protective background they seemed to have shrunk into and, having discovered them, to gain their confidence and secure them as clients—

"How in thunder did you manage it?" demanded the banker, turning abruptly back to Richard.

"That," retorted Richard with a smile that was almost a grin, "is the capital I hope to bring into the firm."

In October he was invited to do so. And so in November, as the youngest member of one of the oldest and most conservative banking-houses in Boston, he had his own department and was as busy a young man as might be found in that city. Far too busy to think, these days, of his aunt's curious will. Or the letter of instruction that might or might not be opened some day.

And far, far too busy, one might suppose, ever to think of Jean Sawyer. But there was that snap-shot Pete had sent him and from which in a moment of impulse he had censored Pete with scissors.

Half a dozen times he had started to throw away the half that portrayed Jean, so shamelessly decked out in silken pajamas.

Indeed it had gone into the waste-basket—once. After a night—in mid-November this—



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when he had had another of those curiously disturbing dreams of her. They had both been on the Lido, she as pictured in the snap-shot. The dream dissolved and reshaped itself and he was in a church. His aunt was there alive. He was being married—to Jean Sawyer—in her silken pajamas.

The next morning when he got up he firmly deposited the snap-shot in his waste-basket. And as soon as he reached the office phoned instructions that his waste-basket was *not* to be emptied.

Presently his phone rang. He took off the receiver and for a second felt as if he were being shot up into space breathlessly.

"This is Jean Sawyer speaking," announced—needlessly—the voice that came to him. "Your aunt's companion, in case you have forgotten."

"Oh, I remember you very well," he babbled. "I—" He caught his tongue just in time. He had been about to be inane enough to tell her that he had dreamed of her just the night before.

"There must be something the matter with the line," he heard her protest. "I missed the last of that."

"I—" he began, and stopped short. The line had gone dead!

"Number-r please," said another voice, as he jiggled the receiver.

"Number!" he exploded. "I was cut off—a most important call!"

"Hang up your-r receiver please," suggested the voice-with-a-smile, "and I'll see if I can trace the call for you."

But the best she could report was that the call had been from the South Station and that perhaps the party would call again.

The party didn't although Richard let his luncheon hour pass in case she should. At two-thirty it suddenly occurred to him that she might have gone to the same hotel where he had seen her last. He called. A pause. Yes, Miss Sawyer was registered. They would give him her room. An interminable wait. Then: "I've been waiting for you to call back," he announced aggrievedly. "We were cut off—"

"Really? I thought you hung up," she retorted. "I realized that I took a chance of being snubbed. But I wanted to see you, on business—"

"I'll be right up," he broke in, and hung up. "Gracious!" she murmured.

Whereupon, being feminine, she turned to her mirror. And was reassured.

Whatever experiences she had had abroad had left no devastating mark on her certainly. She seemed a shade more sophisticated, perhaps, certainly more poised. And yet, at the same time, definitely younger. So much Richard saw in a glance.

"I called you three times this morning before I was permitted to speak to you," she greeted him. "And then when I did get you, and you hung up—"

"But I didn't!" he protested. "We were cut off. I tried to get you."

"I didn't know that. So I called up Pete. And do you know I had a feeling he was busy too! He had seemed so anything but that last summer in Venice, that I wondered. Can you explain it?"

Richard could—but didn't. The fact was that Pete had returned from Europe on the same boat with a girl he had known as a deb two seasons before. Evidently he had believed that travel had improved her, for their engagement had just been announced. And of course Pete felt abashed at Jean's return.

"But he did tell me he had hardly seen you since you had been taken into the firm," she went on. "That took my breath away. Tell me how it happened."

"Why—I dug up a lot of new business," he began, taken unawares.

"I really am clever enough to take that for granted," she assured him. "But—do you know, I have a curious feeling that it all goes back somehow to the trip you had returned from when I saw you last spring just before

I sailed. You had been in northern Vermont—"

"It did start then," he admitted, "though I don't see how you guessed."

"Perhaps I am psychic," she suggested. "Please go on."

It did not occur to him as strange that she should ask him to—or that he should obey. It seemed rather just what he wanted to do.

"I went up to see a woman I had known for years—as a bond prospect," he explained, then broke off and frowned thoughtfully. "I wonder if I can make her seem credible to you."

"I am more or less New England myself," she reminded him. "I even know northern Vermont, for when I was young my father preached in a small town there. It was all built around a chair factory. The man who had owned it was dead but his widow still lived in the awful house he had built—"

"Why, that's the very town I have in mind!" he broke in quickly. "A nephew was running the factory—the widow herself was looked upon as cracked—a miser."

"Please hurry on before I find myself murmuring 'What a small world this is,'" she begged. "You went up to see her and—what happened?"

"I went up, intending to sell her as many bonds as I could in the briefest possible time. But when I got there—this is going to sound funny to you, I know, but—well, she suddenly reminded me of a verse I had come upon in my aunt's Bible. I quoted it to you afterwards, I think."

"Wisdom is good with an inheritance—and by it there is profit to them that see the sun?" she suggested. And added, "But that doesn't suggest her to me. I should say her glimpses of the sun were few, if any."

"That was precisely what struck me!" he assured her. "She wasn't even living—she was no more than waiting for death to overtake her." He paused, and then abruptly added, "She asked my advice about a good investment and I—advised her to buy an automobile!"

"Not really!" gasped Jean. "Whatever made you think of such a thing?"

"An automobile had just gone by—and I had seen something in her eyes," he explained. "It was as if she'd—briefly glimpsed the sun!"

"I wonder you dared—not knowing the condition of her heart," protested Jean. "Suggesting such a thing to a typical New England widow—or rather 'relict.'"

"Relict" is the exact word," he agreed. "And I'm glad you recognize her as typical because it will be easier for you to realize why, after finishing with her, I was keen to experiment with other typical relicts."

"But we haven't finished with her! You can't persuade me that she went right out and bought an automobile. I remember her too well for that! She must have been horrified at the idea of such an extravagance."

"She was," he admitted. "Until I asked her pointblank just what her income was. It hung, I knew, on the knees of the gods whether she would tell me. Secrecy had become an obsession with her. Then suddenly she told me. Her income was—guess!"

"Five thousand a year?" hazarded Jean.

"Thirty!" he announced. "And she had been living on less than a thousand a year."

"Good gracious!" breathed Jean. Then added, "I'll bet that nephew of hers wasn't. I caught a glimpse of him in New York last spring in a restaurant. He was enjoying himself hugely. Ugh—an oily, unctuous little fat man—"

"I suspect he's not so oily or unctuous now," Richard contributed. "He had been milking the chair factory for years. And when he discovered that in reorganizing his aunt's affairs I proposed selling the factory—"

"Please don't go so fast!" she besought. "A moment ago you were persuading her to buy an automobile. Now you speak of reorganizing her affairs."

"The one grew into the other. When her husband died she had come into an income



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of fifty thousand a year. She was as unfit as a child to handle it. Worse than that, she was literally scared stiff. She had never handled money in her life; she was afraid to ask advice, lest somebody defraud her. She was even afraid to spend money, her hold on it seemed so tenuous. She just tried to hold on—with the inevitable result. Both mentally and financially she was in a tangle.

"You begin to sound more like a physician than a bond salesman!" she commented.

"She needed a physician as much as she did a bond salesman, actually. Her income had dropped from fifty to thirty because investments had not been changed. Do you wonder she was obsessed by the fear that it would all disappear?"

"And you cured her—financially and mentally?"

"Before I got through I did manage to convince her that her investments could be so handled that she could be sure of thirty thousand a year and probably more—and that there was no reason why she shouldn't have an automobile."

"And so—she bought it and lived happily ever after?" suggested Jean.

He hesitated. Then, almost apologetically, drew a letter from his pocket.

"I received this from her last June," he said. "I keep it as sort of a talisman—it may answer your question."

Jean took it, and ran through the prim angular script. There was some comment on investments and the sale of the factory. And then:

"I motored over to Burlington last week and saw my sister-in-law for the first time in almost thirty years. It was most enjoyable and we plan to see much more of each other. She has asked me if it would be possible for you to come and see her some time soon and talk over her investments as you did mine."

"I cannot begin to tell you how much easier my mind has been since our talk. I cannot put it into words but I really feel as if I were living."

"I begin," said Jean, returning the letter to him, "to have a new vision of New England. All the 'relicts' placing their affairs in your hands, buying automobiles and stepping out generally."

"Nothing so revolutionary!" he protested, with a smile that was a grin. "I've had some of the relicts all but turn me over to the police. But I have discovered enough of them could be sold on the idea of investing more money in themselves and less in bonds to make life interesting."

"And—may I suggest profitable?" He smiled and she noticed how, even relaxed, his face suggested a new strength and force.

"You may," he admitted. "I really believed when I suggested that my first old lady buy herself an automobile instead of bonds I had done myself out of a needed commission but the way that worked out and the idea it gave me has developed rather surprisingly."

"And so—you don't really need your aunt's money now?"

"I can get along nicely without it," he assured her.

"And that is the irony of fate, I suppose," she murmured. "Here am I torn with temptation. I could use it all so nicely, and yet—"

"What do you mean?" he broke in quickly. "I only hope," she answered obliquely, "that you know some particularly sweet and confiding old relict in whom you can plant a desire to see the world. I could show it to her so nicely and competently. As a companion—"

"A companion!" he gasped. "I—"

"I'll have to let my hair grow again," she moaned. "And I do so love it shingled. And lengthen my skirts and revert to type generally. Isn't it awful?"

"Awful!" he exploded. "Why, it's perfect rot!"

She shrugged her shoulders. "You forget your aunt's letter of instructions," she replied.

He had, absolutely. He forgot his own possible interest in it now. All that he could comprehend was that she was talking of becoming a companion again. Towing some old woman around—why, the idea was preposterous!

"What of it?" he demanded. "You don't need to open it."

She rose, and so did he, but without conscious volition.

"But I have!" she said simply.

"What made you do such a senseless thing?" he demanded almost irately.

"The Pandora complex, I suppose," she retorted frivolously. "Women must open things—don't you know that? As a pathological salesman you ought to, by now. If it weren't so, your old ladies would never have been so tempted—"

"When did you open this—this darned letter, anyway?" he broke in.

"This noon—after I had phoned Pete. Don't you want to see it?"

"No!" he all but shouted.

"But it concerns you. Your aunt wanted you to have the money—if she could only be sure it wouldn't harm you. I know that sounds fearfully theatrical, but if you could have seen her and known how troubled and torn she was—"

"I don't want her money—I won't take it," he announced forcibly.

"But her will—the envelop contained a new one."

"I can fix that up—I'll transfer the money to you," he said.

"To me? Gracious! I did not know that successful men ever became philanthropists—so young. Can't you see that I could hardly accept it?"

"Why not? Be sensible, please."

"You sound so sensible!" she mocked. "Wouldn't the newspapers love it? 'Renounces million, insists that his aunt's faithful companion should have it.' Does that sound sensible to you? How could you ever explain it?"

As she finished her eyes met his. Exquisitely shaped and lashed and, in spite of her mockery, half defiant, half scared.

He took a deep breath—wisely—and swiftly gathered her into his arms. Wisely because he was plunging into breathlessness. She had asked for an explanation, and one had suddenly, dazzlingly, been vouchsafed him.

"Can—can you explain this?" he asked huskily, his lips close to hers.

A golden glow pervaded him. He felt as if a thousand sky-rockets had been discharged in his immediate vicinity and, in the general explosion, he had caught at the tail of the largest and soared upwards with it.

Abruptly he returned to earth.

"Ever so easily," her voice came to him. "I rather deliberately planned it—to see if I could make you fall in love with me."

Startled, he half released her. "W-what?" he gasped.

"I had to," she explained. "As a matter of self-respect. You were such a lordly young male—back in the days when I was your aunt's companion. And I was so much the humble Christian slave you never really saw. Yet I felt that with clothes and—oh, the other things every woman knows—that I could make you see me. As feminine—not just female."

He released her altogether.

"Do you mean you did—did this for revenge?" he demanded hotly.

"You sound disapproving," she replied. "But revenge is very sweet—to say nothing of the luxurious feeling it gives a woman, to know that she can—"

There her voice broke off, her eyes evaded his. And—she was trembling. He realized that and something quickened within him anew.

"Jean," he besought, "are you just being feminine? Perhaps I should be punished but do you think I deserve to be tortured?"

"Tortured?" she flamed. "Don't you know that when a man looks right through a girl as

if she didn't exist that—that is—torture?" Sky-rockets were beginning to go off again. "Not unless she loves him," he suggested quickly.

"That isn't true," she denied as quickly. "Any girl would feel—"

But Richard had her in his arms again, holding her as if he would squeeze the truth from her.

"Isn't it true—with this girl, anyway?" he implored. "Please, Jean."

Ever so briefly she wavered. And then, slowly, her eyes came up to his. Lustrous and dilated, so that she seemed all eyes to him.

"Well—perhaps," she conceded. And added, in a little rush, "But I'll tell you right now that—that I'll make you pay for having made me tell you so!"

"I'll pay through the nose!" he promised with great gladness.

And he began, forthwith. But not, most certainly, through his nose.

"Anyway," she managed to say presently "I think I did administer the income wisely and according to your aunt's wishes."

"By getting me?" he teased.

"By saving you from the fate she feared for you most. She used to say 'Richard is just the sort that will remain a bachelor until he's fifty—and then fall in love with some chit who will marry him just for my money.'"

There she paused perforce. For Richard, as if acknowledging a fresh debt, had resumed payment as promised.

Though still, not through his nose.

## Dark Dawn

(Continued from page 53)

Mrs. Blundell," Hattie told her confidently. "Of course, of course. I mean that plans sometimes have a way of turning out different than we expected. It was so with poor Ben Torson, but I always say—"

Hattie's eyes had moved contentedly to the window through which she could see one of her own fields lying white with snow. Across the road, there, lay Mons Torson's place. Her eyes narrowed almost perceptibly as they took in the tangle of willows lying in a slight hollow just below Torson's house. Mons Torson had burned those willows out last spring, but before harvest-time they were struggling forth again, an insidious, determined growth, and Mons had left them alone. A slight sharpness appeared about Hattie's nostrils. Mrs. Blundell was talking sociably, but Hattie did not hear her. Her mind was out there in that dark smudge of willows.

There were church people in the district who thought it a scandal that old Doctor Muller should call his gray team Sodomy and Gomorrah. There were others who, regarding the lamentable wrecks that hauled the doctor about the country, were convinced that there could be no sacrilege in the use of names that were so obviously appropriate.

They were reluctant beasts on the road. They were overfed and yet they managed to keep themselves spitefully thin. Muller cursed them continually, vowed after every trip that he would rid himself of them, and loved them like brothers. They were undoubtedly possessed of uncanny gifts. If Muller had been tipping unwisely, a sudden galloping of his team would restore him to instant sobriety and he would come to his case prepared to exercise his utmost skill. Nor were they without their grim sense of humor. Muller often told of the night when they tore into the farmyard of an old homesteader who had been a sufferer from heart trouble. Muller came upon the body of the old man lying in the stable. He had been dead, alone there, for two days.

But Sodomy and Gomorrah plodded along soberly enough on the snowy day when Muller visited the Murker farm. Their uncanny sense must have served them there, too, for the

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doctor was in no great hurry to encounter Lucian Dorrit in the home of his wife. With all his insistence on the grim comedy of life, Muller experienced nothing but heaviness of heart every time he thought of the marriage of Lucian and Hattie. The gossip in Loyola only embittered him.

He did not know why he had planned another kind of life for Luce Dorrit. He did not know why he should still cling so desperately to the hope that somehow the heartless comedy would resolve itself happily even yet, and that the last curtain should not go down on the tragedy of futile dreams. But these were thoughts that he never shared with anyone in Loyola.

Ho-hum! Here was Hattie Murker's farm at last. Muller was never to call her anything but Hattie Murker, in his own mind. He derived a perverse and naive satisfaction from denying her her new and lawful appellation.

He drove through the open gateway and up the narrow slope to the house. There was Bert now, a pail in either hand, trudging heavily down the pathway toward the barn. He turned at the sound of Muller's approach and lifted one hand, bucket and all, in a gesture of greeting. The doctor waved his hand and Bert kept on his way to the barn.

When he had tied his team to a post in the yard, Muller climbed to the back porch and knocked at the door. In a moment the door was opened and Hattie herself stood before him in a checked all-over apron, her cheeks flushed from baking. She looked Muller straight in the eyes as they shook hands.

"Howdy-do, Doctor Muller!" she greeted him, with one of her rare, determined smiles. "Come right in. I've got newspapers on the floor till it dries. Give me your hat and coat. Now, you sit right down there while I take a look at my buns."

As Muller took the chair she indicated he had the sensation of being swept along on a wave. He watched her as she knelt before the oven to look at her buns. She was certainly a striking-looking woman, he thought, a little bitterly—too striking! He could think back easily to a time in his boyhood when he would have cringed in her presence. He sighed comfortably now in the safety of his years and wisdom.

"Luce is toward the quarry," Hattie was saying. "You'll take a cup of coffee, now, won't you, and he'll be back before you go. He'll be glad to see you, being this is the first time you've come here since we got married."

She dumped the buns out on the table and with swift, deft fingers began to butter their golden-brown tops. Hattie had won many first prizes at the county fairs for her bread and buns, Muller remembered.

"They look mighty fine, Hattie," he said admiringly. "Am I going to have one?"

"With honey from my own bees," she replied promptly.

He watched her while she went about preparing coffee and spreading a white cloth at one end of the table, and their talk was of Loyola and the hard winter and the hope of an early spring. She seemed content, in a brisk, resolute sort of way, and yet—Muller's avidity for the truth of things would give him no peace. He had listened to none of the slanderous gossip of Loyola. He shared none of Loyola's prurient curiosity. But he could not help wondering how it had all come about.

"Married life seems to be agreeing with you, Hattie," he observed mildly. "I never saw you look so pretty."

Hattie looked pleased, in a guarded way. She had never quite trusted Muller, with his half-smiling, quizzical eyes. For all his professional ability, he must be rather a fool to be always smiling to himself when, for the life of her, she could see nothing whatever to smile about.

"Sit in, now, and have a bite," she urged, taking the pot of coffee from the stove. "I always have a cup myself this time of day. Luce comes in if he isn't too far from the house. He ought to be in now, any minute."

Muller sat down to the steaming coffee and Hattie went to the window to look out.

"I don't see any sign of him yet, but he'll be along," she said and returned to the table.

Muller took a sip of coffee and settled back in his chair, his faint smile playing about the corners of his mouth. "You certainly surprised us all, the two of you," he began. "Nobody guessed what was up till it was all over. You might have given us a chance to buy a wedding present, at least, Hattie."

In spite of his smile, there was something quietly accusing in the tone of his voice. Nor was his manner lost upon Hattie. She felt, quickly, that he was in some vague way accusing her personally. A sharp flame of resentment kindled within her. She set down her cup and fixed her eyes squarely upon Muller.

"Yes—it was sudden," she said. "We didn't know about it ourselves until one night Luce came here to see me. But there are some people in the world, Doctor Muller, who can make up their minds. I might 'a' married someone older than Luce—and steadier—but he's a good boy and he's strong and healthy and I know I can make something out of him—and that's more than can be said for most of the men I've seen round Loyola. He'll help me make this farm what it ought to be—and what father wanted it to be—a place that we'll both be proud to hand on when we're too old to look after it ourselves."

She had been talking very fast. Her voice stopped abruptly and her eyes moved to the window. Muller fancied that she saw from it the limitless extent of her ambition. He moved a little uneasily in his chair and his eyes narrowed as he leaned forward and regarded her for a moment silently.

"You'll probably do all that, the two of you," he said quietly. "And you'll probably raise a healthy family to take it over when you give it up, too. Only—I have wondered a little about it all, Hattie. I—"

Her manner became suddenly belligerent. "I know what you have been wondering," she broke forth. "And I know what the whole crowd in Loyola has been wondering, too. But I don't care what they think. Every woman has a right to a home. She has a right to a man and—children. And a woman has got to take her chance when it comes to her. It wasn't my fault that I didn't marry Ben Torson. But they all acted like it was. For a year they've been talking behind my back about that. I don't care. I wanted children to grow up and have this land after me. I wanted to have something to look forward to in the future. I had a right to want it. And when Luce Dorrit came to me, I took him. That's the truth and I don't care who knows it!"

Muller's eyes fell to the floor. There was something in Hattie's presence that he could not meet with equanimity, try as he might. He had seen it in women before, that uprising of the primitive that brooks no opposition and listens to no argument.

There was a sound of footsteps on the porch and Hattie got to her feet to go to the door.

"That's Luce now," she said.

She opened the door and Lucian came in, drawing off his buckskin mitts, and advanced to shake hands with Muller. The doctor did not fail to notice the blush that leaped to his cheeks, or the suddenly confused look of his eyes.

"Good Lord, he's only a boy still!" Muller thought to himself with dismay.

"Hello, Muller!" Lucian cried out with a grin. "How's the doc, eh? Pretty near time you were showing up. I've been too busy to call on you—and too healthy. But Hattie can tell you how often I've talked about you—eh, Hattie?" Hattie smiled as Lucian came to her and threw his arm about her waist. "And how do you think my wife is looking, doc?" he asked heartily. "Fine, eh? And the best darned cook in the country, if I do say it myself!"

"I'll swear to that, Luce," Muller assented and he meant what he said.

Hattie disengaged herself with a slight smile and went to the stove for the coffee-pot. Luce drew a chair to the table and sat down beside Muller.

Lucian joked about the suddenness of his marriage and the shock it must have been to the people in Loyola who always knew of a coming event, be it a birth, a death or a marriage, ages before its arrival.

When the time came for Muller to leave, Lucian went out with him, untied his horses and led them to the trough which had frozen over and had to be cut through. While Lucian pumped fresh water Muller looked at him closely. Now that he had shed his defense of good humor the fate that had befallen him showed itself clearly in his face. Muller, characteristically, thought that he looked like a man who had survived a great illness at the cost of a tremendous struggle. There had been a time when Muller could have spoken to him and offered, somehow, to help. That day had passed. The relentless, pitiless force that directs the life of every human being had taken hold of Lucian Dorrit. All that was left now for Doctor Muller was to sit by and idly watch; protestingly, perhaps, but idly.

He shook hands with Lucian, a little more vigorously, perhaps, than he had an hour or so before. His eyes, with the left brow lifted, squinted a little more than usual as he slapped Lucian on the shoulder.

"Take care of yourself these raw days," he warned and got into his cutter.

He drove away feeling rather fatuous and old.

Those months of the first winter of his marriage were to Lucian Dorrit a grotesque unreality. He moved in a fantastic dream. The dream, rather, moved about him. He looked at Hattie and saw her going about her daily tasks in a world that had all the outward appearances of reality but none of the inner substance of it. Her complacent acceptance of everything, including Lucian himself, her unwavering devotion to a routine that had swept him up and carried him along without a moment's pause for readjustment, convinced him at times that his existence with Hattie had been an hallucination from the very first, that something in his brain had snapped on that memorable night of snow and white moonlight. Try as he would, he could think of her only as one of the "older girls" at school, rather forbidding, friendly in a distant, lofty way, remote. Sometimes in the depth of night he would awaken, bewildered, beside Hattie, wonder where he was and what had happened to him, and lie awake for hours trying to understand.

However bold may have been the front he presented to the little world in which he lived, he was none the less sensitive to its thoughtless ridicule. In many ways the attitude of the people in Loyola became clear to him. There were days when his arrival in town brought little boys darting into the street to shout things after him, execrable things they had heard, doubtless, from their elders and had translated into their own peculiarly vivid, gross, small-boy language. He had come to fear, too, the faces that would press close to the frozen windows as he passed along the street and vanish suddenly as he turned to look at them.

He cursed himself for his own sensitiveness, but found no means to cure it. The world's most bitter thorn, the moral censure of little lives, had set deep into the soul of Lucian Dorrit.

For all his suffering, however, the people of Loyola had no inkling of the paralysis that had seized his spirit. Nonplused by his buoyant air, they would crane their necks to watch him as he swung down the street, his broad shoulders still moving with their unconscious slight sway in the leather, fleece-lined jacket everyone knew Hattie had bought for him; they would watch him again as he drove out of town, standing straight and arrogant in the new green sleigh that Hattie had also bought, behind the two deep-chested dappled grays, flicking the whip now and then in a wide, graceful circle to their ears. They might watch as they pleased, but they would see nothing crushed about Luce



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Dorrit, nothing humbled in that straight blue eye of his, as there should have been.

On each return from Loyola on those cold winter evenings, with an unspeakable bitterness gnawing at his thoughts, he almost welcomed the strange physical intoxication which Hattie brought to him. She would meet him at the door, her shadow sprawling on the white wall behind her, the lamp on the table making bold angles of warm yellow and grayish violet on the sloping ceiling. Hattie's shoulders would be square and stiff, her neck a white rigidity above the plain gingham of her dress, her eyes smoldering, sullen and warm.

She was a deep mystery to Lucian. From the first he had known vaguely that his emotion toward her was not love. She was a sensation in which he had drowned all other thought and feeling. She was something new, delicious, strange, bounteous. He was humbled even in the moment that he was stirred by her presence. She was unapproachable in her dignity even when the rigid set of her shoulders was a deliberate challenge to him. She was a remarkable woman and his indignation rose at the thought of the mean souls who pretended to hold her in contempt.

It was on evenings when Bert remained at home instead of going to Loyola or to some neighboring homestead, that Hattie's charm over Lucian failed of its wonted power. As far back as he could remember, Lucian had had a horror of the slothful, splay creature who was neither boy nor man, whose hands hung inert before him, dangling from his wrists, whose head was always a little to one side in the abstracted attitude of listening, and whose intelligence was far more clear than he would admit. Bert was possessed of certain oddments of skill, but he had a genius for putting them to uses that were altogether grotesque and often horrible and cruel.

Lucian was grateful for the heavy work on the Murker place, work that used the body of a man ruthlessly from colorless icy dawn until long after darkness had come down. There was twice as much live stock on the Murker farm as there had ever been on the Dorrit place, but Hattie and her brother had managed during the winters without hired help. Now most of the work fell upon Lucian's shoulders. For no apparent reason, Bert's capabilities, to say nothing of his interest, seemed completely to have failed since Lucian's coming. But work brought sleep, and sleep a sort of forgetfulness.

As spring approached, Hattie spoke of wider interests which became her new station in life. There were the doings of the school board and the Woman's Auxiliary and the Christian Endeavor Society and the municipal council. As a married woman and as a land-owner of some prominence in the district she was not going to permit her neighbors to lose sight of the fact that she had rights that must be respected. There were positions of honor, moreover, to which she might aspire and for which she felt herself adequately qualified. Nor did she turn her eyes to wider fields because she felt any sense of insecurity in her own. She was content with Lucian, and never questioned Lucian's contentment in his life with her. As the weeks wore on, she affected, by a dexterous taking of their joint life for granted, the comfortable monotony with which she believed all happy marriages were blessed.

There were moments, however, when a certain lack of instinctive confidence in her position had to be met with a fierce resoluteness. Such moments were inevitably followed by periods of speculative indulgence toward Lucian. She would look at him in the lamplight with half-closed eyes, and in her deep, measured voice would suggest something for his comfort, his pleasure, which she was so able to give him. Already she had secretly come to hate his love of reading, but she urged him, nevertheless, to send to the city for books which Lucian had never been able to afford. She had even gone so far as to suggest that he should take a couple of weeks off in the early summer and join Muller on his annual fishing trip to the lakes in the north. She spared no

pains to convince him that he was free as he had never been in his life before—and all the while she was slowly, inexorably possessing him.

It was a simple thing that first brought to Lucian a realization of his complete compromise. March had come in with a week of warm days and nights that had wasted the snow and started the water running over the winter ice in the creeks. It had turned suddenly cold then, so that the sloughs had given themselves a fresh covering of glare-ice. On a cold night toward the middle of the month, Lucian sat with Hattie and Bert about the kitchen table. Lucian was reading a book and Hattie, busy with a bit of crocheting, glanced toward the open pages with a fine frown knitting her brows. Bert was busy fashioning a new gopher trap out of a small box and pieces of string.

"I think I'll build onto the house in a year or so, Luce," Hattie announced quietly. "We'll be needing more room here soon."

Lucian continued to stare at the print before him, although he did not see it. Hattie's tone had sent through him a spasm of uneasiness.

"Why more?" he asked, not knowing what else to say and not wishing to betray his annoyance.

Hattie looked up at him, level-eyed, her smoothly parted hair calm above her brow. Lucian felt that look and raised his eyes. He had a fleeting glimpse of her then as she really was—quiet, inflexible, unbending, serene in her acceptance of him into her life. And with that glimpse of the power that was in her, Lucian felt a shock of fear that amounted almost to panic.

"I think, Luce, we would do well to begin now planning for the future," she said evenly as she took up her work again. "There will be children, let us hope, and when they come there'll be less time for making plans. Anyhow, with you helping me, we'll be able to afford a bigger house."

A silly tattoo seemed to be beating in Lucian's brain. There was something that he ought to tell Hattie, something he ought to explain to her—that he was an impostor here—that her children . . . It was ridiculous . . . Hattie Murker, one of the older girls at school . . .

Why could he not tell her what was in his mind? Why must he be always telling himself that he himself was responsible for it all and that he had to go through with it now like a man?

"I'll do everything I can to help you, Hattie," he said lamely, "though that isn't much, Lord knows!"

She lifted her eyes with the stolid, impenetrable look he had sometimes seen in them, and sat for a moment staring at the wall. That look was a chilling, mysterious thing to Lucian.

"You have already done more than you have any idea of," she told him enigmatically.

"What do you mean, Hattie?" he asked.

She smiled at him suddenly. Hattie was almost pretty when she smiled. "There are some things, Luce, you will never understand," she said with a laugh that was half sigh.

At such moments she seemed much more than four years older than Lucian. Already she had shown him how a word from her could make him feel puerile, ineffectual. And yet she was laying vast, slow plans, weaving their lives together indistinguishably. As he sat there motionless, pretending to read in front of Hattie, she seemed to grow to a terrifying height, overpowering him. He thought suddenly of his mother and of how he had wanted to run away from her when he was very small. The leaves of his book, as he tried to turn them casually, rattled crisply against the silence.

All at once Hattie was speaking again. "I like the feel of building going on, Luce. It makes you feel healthy and strong yourself—and successful, like. I always think there's a difference between just sitting around and thinking about things and getting out and doing them. When you think too much you don't do enough. And when you do things you can't help feeling that you can do more and



more. I like the good, strong, healthy feeling it gives you."

"As though—as though there ain't a thing you can't get—if you really want it, eh, Hattie?" Bert suddenly broke in.

There had been a strange intensity in Hattie's words which Lucian, even in his abstraction, did not fail to notice. But Bert's remark repelled him with the hint of something shadowy and terrible.

Hattie stood up just then, her shoulders very erect, and looked down at Lucian for a moment before putting away her work for the night. It was that hard, invincible line of her shoulders that had tormented Lucian first, that had made him want to possess her. He knew now, with sudden startling, cruel certainty, that he had never possessed her, that it had been but a false moment of excitement, and that she would never be possessed by anyone, much less by him. As he looked at her he felt helplessly young, inexpressibly callow and unfit. If there were only someone to whom he might go, with whom he might talk for an hour! Perhaps Mons Torson would be coming back soon. Or perhaps he might go down and see his brothers if it did not storm before another night.

"Haven't you done enough reading for one night?"

It was Hattie's voice again. Lucian closed his book quietly and got up from his chair. For the past hour he had not read a word.

The next night was clear with a rising wind that promised more snow. That day Lucian had walked a short distance along the shallow creek that ran southward through the farm, on past the Dorrit place, and joined Lost River miles beyond Loyola. The soft weather had spread its surface with water from the fields and it was now a gleaming ribbon of new ice. As a boy, Lucian had sped on his skates up and down the tortuous course of that creek—someone had named it Cedar River—had journeyed south beyond Loyola with his brothers, and had explored its banks northward as far as the nearest bush land, some five miles away, with all the thrills of rare adventure attending him. During the first month of his life with Hattie, he had donned his skates and proved to himself that he had not lost the knack of it yet although there had been too much snow to permit of his going far from home. Now he felt the old urge within him again as he stood on the bank of the creek and let his eye rove over the gleaming surface.

When he had finished his supper, he got his skates out with almost boyish glee and told Hattie he was going down the river to see his brothers.

"I'm afraid we're going to have snow soon, Luce," she said gently, patting him into his leather jacket. "You'd better try and be back early."

From his place in the corner near the kitchen stove, Bert, for some perverse reason of his own, giggled audibly. Luce reddened with anger. Bert never lost an opportunity to laugh at him in his idiotic, knowing way.

"Don't worry, Hattie," he said stoutly. "I'll not stay late."

He crossed a field below the barns and pushed his way through the gray fretwork of winter brush to the river bank. There he sat down and put on his skates with a feeling of eagerness that he had thought was lost to him now. His feet were long and ungainly and a little boyish still. The ankles had not set into their full strength as they were to do in the years to come, in the good years of the labor of the body as well as of the soul.

Lucian was a long, light skater, dipping and swerving with undiminishing speed at the curves of the river. He skated low, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, his head well forward and taking the wind with zest for its penetrating chill. His skates rang over the dark surface of the ice and here and there left a tiny white drift where the blade had cleaved and turned the ice to powder. A boy skating with long, clean, untrammelled limbs in the fierce air, was Luce Dorrit. Here was solitude,



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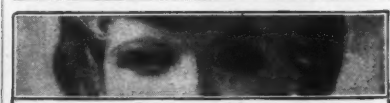
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and power again, the power that comes in the solitude of a boy. And in the straggling willows on the river bank a small wind nickered, an elfin spectator, droll, unhuman, cruel.

From the river he saw the light in the window of his mother's kitchen. They would probably be sitting down to supper now, since they were in the habit of eating late, after all the work was done for the night.

He took off his skates and started up the path past the barn. His sister Leona had been out getting water and was replacing the gunny sack about the pump to keep it from freezing, when Lucian hailed her.

"Oh, Luce!" she burst out joyfully and set her pail down to rush upon him. He caught her up from the ground and held her for a moment in his arms. "Gee, I've been lonesome, Luce! And I'm glad you've come. Can you stay all night?"

Luce had set her on her feet again and had picked up the pail of water and started for the house. "All night! Do you think a married man can run off whenever he likes and not come back till morning? Or have you forgotten that I'm married?" He laughed and pinched her ear. "It ain't done, Leone. But I'll stay long enough to give you a game of 'galloping,' if you like."

"Galloping Devil" was a ridiculous, hysterical card game which Leona—and Luce, too, for that matter—adored.

"Oh, goody! Carrie Strand is here. She's going to stay all night with me."

"Great!" Lucian exclaimed. "We'll make a real party of it."

"Her pa had to go to Lost River today and he won't be back till tomorrow. Gee, Luce, but she's smart. You ought to see her draw now. She can draw just anything. She's been practisin' a lot lately and she says she's goin' down to some school in the city where they teach you to draw, just as soon as her pa lets her go."

They were at the door now and Leona burst in with the announcement that Luce had come. The kitchen table was set with its red checked cloth, and the stove was steaming with hot, odorous food. Agatha Dorrit stood over the fire, her high cheek-bones red from the heat, her hair pulled back severely.

"Well—and you *did* come!" she said, with her slightly grieved air.

Her eyes held him piercingly. As of old, Lucian's sense of guilt in his mother's presence came upon him. Hating himself for the feeling, he threw his skates down noisily on the floor and hung his cap on a nail.

"Let out for the evening," he returned to her greeting.

He laughed as he spoke, but he did not fail to catch the looks that were exchanged between his brothers as he turned toward them seated at the table.

"Hello, kids!" he called to them. "Hello, Carrie! I didn't expect to find you here."

Karen Strand was seated between Manlius and Arnold at the table.

"She didn't expect to find you, either, or she wouldn't 'a' come—eh, Carrie?" Manlius put in.

She smiled and looked up at Lucian with her large, dark-fringed eyes. "Oh, he's married now, so it doesn't matter," she countered.

"Well, sit in and have a cup o' tea with us," Agatha Dorrit invited.

Lucian drew a chair to the table and sat down opposite his brothers with Leona beside him.

"And how is Hattie?" Mrs. Dorrit asked. "She can't be wonderin' much about me, for all she's seen o' me since the winter set in."

Lucian hastened to explain that Hattie had gone out very little during the cold weather, invented a dozen reasons for her failure to visit his mother, and did his best to placate her mood and make her more agreeable. It seemed to Lucian that he had always been doing something of the kind when he and his mother had been together.

"And do you like your wife—a great deal?" Karen asked abruptly when he had done what he could with his mother.

Manlius and Arnold burst into laughter. Karen seemed unaware of their amusement. She sat coolly detached, one small hand cupping her chin.

"He dassen't do anything but," Arney put in, and received a kick in the shin from Manlius.

Lucian laughed almost as if he had enjoyed the brotherly gibe. Then he turned the conversation into safer channels, asked them about their work and how the live stock was faring and how far they had progressed with their preparations for the spring seeding. Immediately after his marriage to Hattie, Lucian had deeded over to his two brothers all the rights he had fallen heir to on his father's death—all except the title to a small stretch of stony, inarable ground that lay along the southern boundary of the Murker farm. This strip of land, for some obscure reason, William Dorrit had loved, although it had lain fallow for years and had eaten up all the seed that had ever been put into it without yielding enough to pay for the harvesting of it. The Dorrit boys would have no use for the ground since it was in an awkward position for grazing purposes and Lucian had retained it in his own name. Neither Manlius nor Arnold had protested. Agatha Dorrit had sighed heavily and dropped a few tears—she could be very sentimental at times, for all her lack of understanding. Hattie had been frankly amused.

The table was no sooner cleared of the supper dishes than Lucian and the two girls sat in to the promised game of "Galloping Devil." For an hour then there was much hilarious laughter and feigned venom, Lucian making a great show of malice toward his nimble-fingered and quick-witted opponents. There was no pretense, however, in the mood in which the girls presently received Lucian's abrupt announcement that it was time for him to go. He yielded to the extent of playing "just one more round," then hurriedly took his cap and coat from the wall and picked up his skates.

Leona threw a shawl about her shoulders. "I'm going to walk down as far as the creek with you, anyhow, Luce," she said. "Come on, Carrie!"

Karen's eyes shone and she hurried for her hat and coat. Lucian's mother stood in the doorway as they went out, her hands folded in her apron, and called good-by. As he turned to wave his hand to her, Lucian heard her sentimental sniff, and hurried away.

"Why does ma do that—every time I come down?" Luce asked his sister impatiently as they moved down the dark path. "It doesn't mean a darned thing—and never has."

"Well—that's ma," Leona sighed.

They walked in silence through the gray darkness with its ragged fringe of black where the brush hid the creek. The girls went out on the ice to slide while Lucian sat down on the bank to put on his skates.

When he was ready, he got to his feet and skated out upon the ice.

"Come on, Spingle," he called. "Take a turn with me before I go."

He stretched out his hands to Karen and she took them eagerly. He caught her up into the air and waltzed with her on the ice, to her breathless delight. When he had cut a number of fancy figures, he carried her back to the shore and set her down. While she clung to him still he kissed her upturned face and was suddenly startled at the soft warmth of her lips.

"Whew!" he cried as he straightened up and drew back. "You're getting almost too heavy for me, Spingle. First thing I know you'll be growing up."

He was not thinking much just then of the words he was speaking. He was thinking that he must never again kiss Karen Strand.

At that moment, it happened that Doctor Muller was relaxing mentally after a dinner he had eaten at the table of Mr. Tingley, the principal of the school in Loyola. The dinner had been good, and Muller, sprawled in a comfortable chair in Tingley's study, was quite



capable of carrying on what his host fondly thought was brilliant conversation and still have ample energy for all the requirements of good digestion. Loyola mistrusted the soul of Doctor Muller even while it admitted that it could not get on without his mind. But Mr. Tingley, who smilingly patronized what he elected to call "the yoke" and never ceased to yearn for companionship with a "kindred spirit," rarely lost an opportunity to pay his respects to Muller's intellect, protesting the while that men of superior mental attainments must be forgiven much that could not be condoned in others. Not that Mr. Tingley asked indulgence for anything outwardly irregular in his own life. He was the tender husband of a nervous little woman whose timidity in the presence of strangers was more than compensated for by her intrepid behavior in private.

The two men were alone with their after-dinner cigars.

"I see Mons Torson has come back from the camps," Mr. Tingley remarked idly. "I met him on the street this afternoon."

"Strange fellow, Torson," Muller observed.

"Very," Tingley agreed. "Not much like his brother. Ben was a pretty steady sort." He glanced through the doorway to assure himself that Mrs. Tingley was well out of hearing. "By the way, Muller," he went on, "I've never had a chance to ask you what you thought of this marriage of young Luce Dorrit and Hattie Murker. Isn't there something preposterous about it—even in this exceedingly preposterous little corner of the world?" He pronounced the adjective with great stress and sibilation.

"What?" Muller grunted. His tone was as nearly impatient as was becoming in a guest.

"Well—you know—ah—even here where life is likely to be a little—a little careless, shall we say?—even here we look for—for—well, for—"

"Congruity," Muller supplied.

"Exactly. A little appropriateness—especially in a serious business like getting married. You know, I find it hard to reconcile myself to the fact that Luce Dorrit—you remember he showed promise in his high-school work—that he should have married the Murker woman. Dorrit was a presentable chap—handsome, too, as these country boys go—and he had a really quite unusual mind. I'd looked for big things from Luce—yes, indeed, I had."

Mr. Tingley's voice had dropped into a musing tone which he fancied created for his listener an atmosphere of mellowness, studied thoughtfulness, quality. Muller's shoulders had slumped gradually, his head had fallen forward upon his chest, his eyes were on the floor.

"My experience, Tingley," he observed in his husky, almost guttural but not unpleasant voice, "is that there is a large element of the incongruous in all marriages. We happen to see it in this one because it was somewhat picturesque as well as incongruous. The devil of it is, the experience of most young men who marry is, in a lesser or greater degree, identical with that of Luce Dorrit. The noose that hangs them is chivalry."

Tingley twitched a little and glanced toward the door once more to make sure that his wife was not within hearing. Then he leaned forward in his chair and spoke in a cautious tone. "Don't you think you're on thin ice there, Muller?" he asked.

The doctor cleared his throat dryly, crossed one knee over the other, and knocked the ash from his cigar.

"Young Luce Dorrit has done wrong to no one but himself," he said, disregarding the question his host had put to him. "The shame of it is that he'll have to grow up before he finds that out. Ninety-nine out of every hundred young men of Luce Dorrit's age are pathetic fools, idealists. That strain of idealism was stronger in Luce than it is in most men, too. His father before him had it—never got over it. Somehow life would have got Luce Dorrit. It happens that it got him by means of a woman, but that was largely accidental—except that it gets most of us by the same

means. But somewhere in the cursed scheme of things, something—or somebody—side-stepped, shirked, fell down, and the burden of honor rests upon Luce Dorrit's shoulders. It happens all the time, Tingley, in Loyola—in London—in Hindustan. One of two things happens to the victim. Either he fights back and emerges in control of himself and of the world about him—or he goes under—sneaks away into the outback of existence—loses himself in the welter of little lives—grows too indifferent, even, to die—drinks himself into oblivion—wallows . . ."

The doctor's voice sank almost to a whisper. It was not flattering to Mr. Tingley, this realization that his guest was actually communing with himself. The principal shifted, tapped with his middle finger upon the arm of his chair, thought, uncomfortably, that it was always a hazardous thing to invite Muller to dinner in one's home.

But Muller sensed nothing of his host's embarrassment. He drew himself up suddenly in his chair and laughed aloud.

"Tingley," he said, "God's a funny old man!"

Lucian, his leather jacket buttoned closely about his throat, was speeding homeward over the ice, the darkness on the creek folding him in. The night had become more bitter, and fine snow particles were filling the air. The keen wisps of wind nipped at his cheeks and snatched away the warmth of his blood. In the dry willows on the shore moved a sound as bleak as death. Beyond the banks of the stream the prairie stretched, a baleful, grayish glimmer, immeasurably cold.

When he sat down at last to take off his skates, an unnatural weariness seemed to creep over him. The thought occurred to him that it would be very easy to lean back against the snow-bank and fall asleep. A few snow flurries slanted down out of the air and swept his face. The storm he had expected was coming. By morning, if he lay back in the snow, he would have become a part of the drift. Slowly he removed his skates and got to his feet. He took the narrow trail up past the barns to where it joined the road that led westward to the main highway. There he paused suddenly. A great wavering bulk was emerging from the shadows before him.

A low exclamation brought Lucian to a halt.

"Is that you, Mons?" he called.

"Yes," came the reply.

They drew close together and Lucian groped for words to say to this friend of his. He was filled with an incomprehensible, painful excitement. It was Mons Torson who spoke first, in a thick voice charged with emotion.

"You didn't expect to meet me here, eh?"

"I was thinking of you just—just tonight, Mons. I didn't know you were back from the camps."

Mons laughed with an ugly, rasping noise in his throat. "No one knows what Mons Torson will do," he said. "He doesn't know himself. I came back because I had to come back. I went away because I didn't have the guts to stay and face it out, that's what. I came back when I couldn't stand it any longer."

He paused and Lucian moved a step closer to him.

"What's wrong, Mons?" he asked.

Torson's laugh was not pleasant. "Wrong? Why, Luce—oh, you damned kid! Go up to the house there and ask her what's wrong. She ought to know now—if she didn't know before. She ought to know—because I told her. I told her to her face—I damned her for what she is—right to her face, I did. Then I walked out and left her—left her standing there—against her white wall—as if she was nailed to a cross. Go and ask her about it. Ask her why she cursed me. Luce—oh, Luce—"

As though the wind had suddenly whisked the breath from his throat, Torson's voice broke, stopped. Luce stood for several seconds looking at him, muttering something so low that Torson barely heard it.

"Get out of the way—out of the way. I've



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had enough from you—from everybody. Enough. There are some things that are my own—not for you or anyone else to meddle with. My own, do you hear? Get away—now!" He leaned toward Mons Torson, swayed, his control ebbing. "Get away, I'm telling you!" he cried.

With a groan Mons moved a little to one side, his head bowed forward on his chest, and started down the road like a man trying to escape from himself.

There was no light in the house when Lucian entered the yard. His effort to control himself with Mons Torson had left him sick, distraught, undone. Over and over again he told himself that here, at last, was the final test. He must play up now, or accept defeat. He halted before the door. He could not go in just yet. Hattie would be awake still and would know that he had met Torson. Once, twice, three times he walked around the house, struggling to quiet the pounding in his brain.

He let himself in at last, very quietly, and took off his shoes so as not to disturb Hattie. He tiptoed across the floor to the foot of the stairs and stood listening for a moment. No sound came from above.

Carefully he felt his way up and along the hall to his and Hattie's room. He stole softly to the side of the bed and looked down at her hair showing darkly against the pillow. An impulse of pitying tenderness moved him to put out a hand and touch it lightly. He drew back with a start. The hair and the pillow beneath it were wet. She had been crying. There was something strange about that. He had thought Hattie too strong, too proud to be so moved even by Mons Torson. A disquieting sense of mystery settled upon him, a feeling too vague for scrutiny. As he started to undress he listened for a moment to Hattie's breathing. It came lightly, regularly; but it was not the breathing of one asleep. Lucian stared into the darkness and felt the oppressive beating of his own heart.

Well, she would tell him all about it in her own good time.

The next morning Hattie was out of bed at her usual early hour. At breakfast she was in her best humor.

"I'll be needing some things at Loyola today, Luce," she said while they were seated at the table. "Will you take me down in the cutter?"

"Sure, I'll take you down, Hattie," he replied. "I was thinking we'd better make a trip in before the roads get too bad again. Looks like a three-day blow the way it's coming on."

It was while she was dressing to go to Loyola, an act of which Hattie always made something of a ceremony, that she first mentioned Mons Torson to Lucian. He had come up-stairs at her call.

"Mons Torson was here last night, Luce," she said coolly.

"He's back, then," Luce said non-committally.

She did not reply at once. She spent a moment or two adjusting her hat before her mirror. Then she turned to him calmly, neatly clad in her tight-fitting black suit and the stiff little hat that showed her rather large, well-formed ears.

"Luce," she said, "I don't ask you to do much for me that you don't want to do. But from this time on you'll have nothing whatever to do with Mons Torson."

She was drawing on her gloves and as she finished speaking she fastened them at the wrists with two sharp snaps. Lucian had seated himself on the edge of the bed and looked up at her awkwardly. She seemed suddenly to have grown taller. He thought, irrelevantly, that it would be a great joke to go up to her now and push her hat back off her head, pull her clothing awry, tousle her smooth

hair. And then reality came back, frightening him.

"Why, Hattie?" he asked her.

"He was here while you were away last night," she told him again and Lucian thought he saw her tremble slightly as she spoke. "He said things to me that nobody has ever said—things nobody ever will say and—"

Lucian got up and stood before her. She had snatched up her handkerchief and was doing her best to stifle a broken sob. Lucian patted her shoulder clumsily.

"Tell me what he said, Hattie."

Her fingers closed tightly about his arm. Almost at once she was herself again.

"We'll say no more about it," she said.

"You don't have to," Lucian told her, his anger rising now as he thought of his meeting with Torson the night before. "I know very well what he would say. What he expected of me—and how I'd let a woman turn my head—and how you'd got me into this because I wasn't old enough to know my own mind. Don't I know what he'd say? I know what he thinks. But what is all that to us? What's Mons Torson in our lives, Hattie?"

"Nothing, dear, nothing. I didn't mean to say anything about it. Only, I don't want him around here and I don't want you going over there to see him. I intended to tell you that when we got on the road. I'm just all upset this morning, Luce. I called you up-stairs to tell you something else. Luce, dear, I think we're going to have a baby."

There was a ringing in Lucian's ears as of a wind along a hundred fine wires. Waves of heat seemed to rush up over his body. He realized that his arms were slipping away from Hattie's shoulders. He tightened them about her suddenly. Now was the time for a man to play up.

"Are you sure?" he asked her.

"I've known it for some time," she told him.

He looked hard at her. She was a stranger to him. No, she was one of the older girls at school. It was he who was the stranger. Even so, he must say something.

"I'm glad it's going to be," he said in a voice that seemed to come from a great distance.

He felt unspeakably false and weak. Over Hattie's shoulder he saw his own face in the dresser mirror, saw his hounded, miserable eyes and his dejected mouth, and it came to him with a shock that Hattie must see these things, too. He drew himself up stoutly. She must not see him as he saw himself. Their lives must be one from now on. Those dreams of his that belonged to the spacious prairie days of Indian summer must be forever behind him. They were the idle dreams of a boy.

While Hattie crouched against his shoulder, his eyes roamed to the window, and beyond it to the white, hollow land stretching away to the west where the gray horizon seemed it to a nearly colorless sky. There in the spring the rains would brood over the torn and somber earth, there would be the hot ache of growth under the sun; the fulfillment, under the warm wind, of the soil's winter dreams.

Lucian closed his eyes from a sudden dizziness that crowded his heart. William Dorrit had sworn his allegiance to the soil—the soil that had had the power to break his body though it had never utterly possessed his spirit. Like his father, Lucian Dorrit responded to the mystic strength of it, was thrilled by its vast, cruel drama, was challenged to pit his own will against it.

With a mingling of fear and elation, Lucian felt the far horizon closing in upon him as he stood there in the tight room that inscribed his own life with Hattie's, stood there tall and young, and still a little unmanageable in his long limbs, and his wife, Hattie, clinging in his arms.

In the years to come he was to be the sower and the reaper of an obscure harvest in those fields.

*The conflict between Hattie and Lucian, in which Mons Torson is to play a dramatic part, grows more intense as Martha Ostenso lays bare the souls of these prairie folks—in August*

## We Hunt in Summer Snows

(Continued from page 107)

whence the trouble came. Part of the time they were hidden in a ravine.

I did some rapid shooting, fifteen shots, and when we hurried down to take stock we found that I had bagged five instead of four; one had fallen in the ravine without my knowing it. Only the small one got away. The four smaller heads were not as large as we hoped, ranging from forty-four to forty-six inches, but the large one was bigger than we had dared to think possible. Around the curve the horns taped sixty-one inches.

It was four o'clock by the time we began the measuring and the skinning. We made out three Kazak herdsmen in a valley two or three miles away. Tula Bai gathered them in and we were glad of their help. Rain and sleet set in; skinning was bitterly cold work; but eventually I had two entire skins and three head skins ready, and we packed them all over to the ponies across some very broken ground. On the ride back to camp Tula Bai took the lion's share of the load. On his pony he piled the two whole skins, leg bones and all, roping a head on each side of the saddle, and perching himself on top.

It was a quarter to seven, very dark and cold and wet, but he set out undaunted in the lead. In places the ground was boggy and the ponies sank and struggled; elsewhere there were only rocks and holes, and dimly discerned precipices along the very edges of which we skirted, but through it all Tula Bai's white pony glimmered in our van. A white pony is a conspicuous hunting companion, and in the morning I had looked upon it with a very disapproving eye, but at night my feelings were altogether reversed. Khalil sang in Kashmiri and I in English and somehow or other the long, cold hours passed until half past nine, when we caught the glimmer of our camp-fire, after fifteen hours' hunting.

Ted had had a most interesting time, for although he had seen no heads worth shooting, he had counted a great quantity of game—three herds of Karelini ewes and young, totaling thirty-five animals, and two herds of ibex, totaling eighty. It certainly seemed as if we were in a country teeming with game, but the promise was not fulfilled. We were at a loss to understand the subsequent scarcity; the best explanation we could contrive was that the Kalmucks, coming up from the valleys after marmot skins, had driven the large game to distant and unknown feeding-grounds. Ted hunted long hours every day for the ensuing week without getting a shot at a sheep.

Twice he came upon ibex, on each occasion getting three; out of the first lot the best head measured forty-six inches, out of the second the best was fifty-two. Ibex hunting, unless you have the time and inclination to wait for ideal conditions, involves an immense amount of hard climbing with a distinct spice of danger thrown in.

These long hunting days were not attended by ideal weather. There was generally a pot-pourri of sunshine, rain, sleet and snow, the various elements predominating upon different days. Fords, too, were obstacles, swelled by snow water in the afternoon and evening, and on a certain night Ted and Rahima were nearly washed away. The only insect pest was a large fly, bigger than a horse-fly but with a sting not so severe, indeed no worse than a mosquito. It was their multitude and their buzzing that caused the most annoyance. Fortunately when the sun was hidden they miraculously disappeared, but when it came out they equally miraculously reappeared.

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and sighted. We felt that with it there were no alibis available when we missed.

After getting the Karelini rams I turned my attention to collecting females to complete the various groups. I was fortunate enough to find a herd of about twenty ewes late one afternoon. There was a long plateau skirting a river with deep ravines running down to the valley. The sheep were moving along from one draw to another, feeding. A lengthy but comparatively simple stalk brought me within easy range and to our Karelini group was added its female.

The long day hunting always showed something of interest. Twice I came upon foxes—big red fellows with white tips to their tails. The hawks as well as the foxes must have lived largely upon mice, whose runways were everywhere. We collected two kinds, one larger than a common house mouse, with a very short tail, the other only half the size but with a tail almost as long as its body. The former the men caught one night in camp, the latter I saw in the grass and captured by throwing myself off my pony on top of it. It was a good many years since I had prepared any small mammals and Ted was vastly amused at the pride I took in the skins when I had them stuffed and pinned out, looking, I must own, very plethoric and misshapen.

We constantly felt the lack of a 410 shotgun. On the heights we saw numerous ram-chukor, and on the grassy uplands many a covey of partridges. I shot one of the former with my Springfield. A 410 and a .22 Winchester make so little noise that there is as a rule no danger of disturbing the country.

I got a female for the ibex group after a long day among the canyons and ridges of Kargai Tash. The columns of rock had been worn into every fantastic shape. Some were like sphinxes, others like strange birds and beasts. Often erosion had left a great rock perched precariously upon the top of a tall, slender column. Sometimes a solitary stem would arise like a great factory chimney. Ted described the whole scene as he saw it lighted by the sunset, as reminding him of the sky-line of New York. I came upon some ibex lying on isolated rocky pedestals just as the chamois is always shown in the school geographies.

One evening when we were riding down a deep gulch, with a female Siberian roe for the group as the day's contribution, we saw a herd of ibex grazing on the mountains. An hour and a half's stalk would have been called for to put us in range, and by that time it would have been long after dark, so we contented ourselves with studying them through field-glasses and telescope. Khalil felt certain that there were no heads better than forty-five inches in length, but we nevertheless determined next day to go after them, for time was passing and we had the wapiiti group still unstarted. We felt that it would be a very difficult one to get and would require as many days as we could manage to devote to it.

The following morning Ted set off with Rahima across the Kok-Su in the hope of coming on Ovis Karelini, while Khalil and I went to look up these ibex. We had not been gone long when we got a glimpse of six wild pigs bursting through the undergrowth on the opposite side of the ravine. Some hasty shots resulted mainly in misses, but the big boar turning back and away from the rest gave us the idea that he might have been hit. The mountainside was a maze of pig trails and up it we toiled; at length we reached the boar's retreat to find ourselves in a warren of big burrows, down one of which our quarry had gone.

We were now well up the mountain, and decided to keep climbing and then make our way as best we could along the ridge, for it was on this side of the nullah that we had seen the ibex.

Around the rocky peaks, over runways of slide rock, among heaped-up broken boulders we scrambled and slid until we came to a vantage-point from which we could see the

mountainside where we believed the ibex would go for their day's siesta.

They were so much the color of the gray rocks that it was a long time before we could pick them out; but gradually we discovered one after another. An ibex sleeps in the most outlandish positions; here one was sprawled along the ledge with his head hanging down between the rocks, there one lay flat on his side on a sand slide so steep that he seemed through the glasses to be standing up; you would not find more postures in a barrack room of sleeping soldiers. We were about 800 yards away, and examined their heads carefully. Khalil said that there was none with horns fifty inches in length, but I was inclined to disagree with him. The females lay between us and the big males in such a manner as to make stalking impossible until they moved, so there was nothing to do but wait.

It started to rain, then it sleeted, then it snowed. At length the ibex got up; exasperatingly slowly, with false starts, hesitating and retracing their steps, they picked their way down-hill. Noting their direction, we made all haste to cut them off. We topped a ridge and saw them 250 yards away. If I had used better judgment I could have got a hundred yards closer, but the ibex were suspicious and I must shoot. My first bullet took effect; my second misfired and lost me an excellent chance. There followed a fusillade as they dodged about among the rocks. Summed up, I had wounded two, one of which I finished with my last two cartridges. Even when he lay dead we didn't realize his size; I judged fifty inches, Khalil less, but the tape showed fifty-nine and a half.

Darkness was rapidly approaching. Noor-pay had heard us and followed up the valley. We got the skin off and down the mountainside. It was packed on Noor-pay's pony, and how, hampered by the great sweep of the horns, he steered his way through the thickets and the boulders in the pitchy blackness, I failed to understand. Of course it was raining. At half past eight we reached our welcome camp-fire. Ted was not yet in, but at nine he rode up, drenched but cheerful with a fifty-two-inch ibex. He had been all but washed away in fording the river, and we had a busy time drying his camera first and then his other belongings that required less urgent attention.

Next day camp was moved, and another short march planted us on the banks of the Kenu in what was to be a five-day hunting camp—a lovely valley closed in by high mountains, pines on the lower slopes, then small cedars and low bushes; above them the debris of landslides, broken, barren boulders, with an occasional flower in the crevices; and crowning all, the eternal snows.

From here we had ibex, mountain-sheep and wapiiti shooting all within reach.

Each day brought its individual interest—a glimpse of some new mammal or bird, a difficult ford to cross or crag to scale. We needed another ibex for the group, and one day when Khalil was feeling crooked up and needed a rest in camp, I took Noor-pay with me and started off for the ibex grounds.

As we were climbing up the mountain I twice saw ferrets, little brown and white fellows, far too spry for us to catch, although we did our best. They lived in burrows among the rocks. Farther on we came upon several places which wolves had been using as open-air dens. There must have been a good-sized pack, for we traced many hollows between the boulders where they had bedded down. They had been killing ibex and had dragged their quarry some distance down the mountain, for we were still away beneath the ibex country. Of the ibex heads scattered about the rocks, none was more than thirty inches in length.

I only once heard wolves. It was early one frosty morning when the lower hills were covered with a light snowfall. The wolves were in full cry, a musical though sinister sound, with occasional breaks that reminded me of hyenas with their insane laughter.



We did a lot of climbing before we sighted ibex, but we were well above them and could study them at our leisure. I made up my mind that there was no head much better than forty-five inches in length, but there were several with fine, massive horns. Selecting the handsomest for my target, I let drive. He went off almost as if unhit, but Noorpay was not to be deceived and said that I had got him.

Cautiously we clambered after him and found our ibex hanging by one horn from a narrow ledge of rock. Beneath was a sheer drop of 500 feet. The horn was jammed so hard into a crevice that it took our united strength to free it. It had, however, not only saved us a long and most difficult climb down and back, but almost certainly the fall into the canyon would have hopelessly smashed the ibex, rendering both hide and head useless to the museum. We found it no slight task to skin the animal in the little niche into which we dragged it. One slip nearly cost Noorpay his life.

The morning after we reached our Kensu camp, Ted took the side of the valley on which our tent was pitched while I crossed over and started up the mountains opposite, accompanied by Khalil and Noorpay. We had been climbing for about an hour and a half when we came upon a marmot burrow scored with the claws of a bear. He had slipped in his attempt to catch the little rodent and it was clear that the tracks were of the night before. Hitherto we had seen a great deal of bear sign but nothing more recent than three or four days old. Here was a chance for the dogs, so I sent Noorpay back to camp for them while Khalil and I climbed on up the mountain, partly to look for game and partly with the idea that we would be above the dogs and able to watch their line and get to them more quickly in case they came to terms with the bear.

While we were watching a herd of ibex—there were no good heads among them—I thought I heard the dogs give tongue. Khalil was sure I hadn't, so we continued to rake the country with our field-glasses until the time we had allotted for Noorpay's return was almost up. We hurried back to the vantage-point whence the marmot hole was visible; there were Noorpay's and Fezildin's ponies, but neither riders nor hounds to be seen. I had told Noorpay to put the dogs on the trail and loose them. We called out but there was no answer; we felt sure the hunt had gone away without us, but we had commanded one possible direction while watching the ibex, so off we boiled in the opposite, unheeding of falls. My bad knee was thrown out but not seriously. Every little while we stopped to listen for the hounds, and at each ridge we topped we hoped to catch sight of the chase; but ridge succeeded ridge and nothing could be seen. Disconsolately we returned to the ponies. We reached them exasperated and breathless at a quarter past one, to find men and dogs asleep in the grass. Through a misunderstanding the dogs had not been loosed, and the men had not heard our hallooing.

The trail was now far too stale to follow, for there had been a scorching sun all morning, so after a very brief tiffin, I sent Fezildin and the dogs back to camp and plodded once more up the mountain. We had moved from one ridge to another when at four o'clock Khalil announced that he saw a bear walking up a grassy nullah far off on the opposite side of the mountain from that up which we had climbed.

There was a long stalk before us, and no time to lose. We slithered and slipped down the bed of a ravine which was floored with slide rock.

There were two steep hillsides up which to pant and struggle before we reached the nullah in which we had seen the bear.

*Hunting under difficulties and in danger, and forced to take their luck with long shots, the James Simpson-Roosevelt Expedition bags more rare specimens of Asiatic game—as Theodore Roosevelt graphically relates Next Month*

Cautiously we pushed ourselves through the dwarf junipers. We could see nothing, and separated to different vantage-points. I kept a sharp eye on the other two, and soon saw Khalil signaling. When I reached him he pointed out the bear, lying curled up in the undergrowth 150 yards away, on the other slope of the nullah. As I fired, it jumped up and rolled over and over into the bed of the ravine, shouting and howling. Khalil said it was finished, but wishing to make certain, I had fired a couple of shots at the bear as it was rolling, but scored no hit.

We launched ourselves down into the nullah, though Noorpay kept exclaiming that there was no way down and we would all fall. In safety we landed, but the bear was gone. We caught a fleeting glimpse of something running through the underbrush and once more I opened fire. Noorpay turned cautious; he was manifestly a great respecter of bears, but he was too loyal not to follow in our wake. Two hundred yards down the ravine we stopped to reconnoiter and then it was that Noorpay caught sight of a bear's ears well up the side down which we had come. He had some difficulty in making Khalil and me see it, but at last I did. With the second shot, down came the bear, shot through the heart, bounding from rock to rock, to bring up stone-dead within thirty yards of us.

It was an old he-bear, very fat. We had no time for taking stock and congratulating ourselves, for it was after six. I hastily jotted down the measurements, tried a time exposure with my camera, and we settled down to the skinning in desperate earnest. Daylight was about gone when we started back up the ravine, but of a sudden Noorpay stopped; his keen eyes had picked up a blood trail. "Yekke aya—two bears," he said. Khalil stoutly maintained that there had been but one; I sided with Noorpay, but it was far too late to hope to follow a trail.

We turned our attention to the serious work of getting ourselves and the bearskin back to camp. First Noorpay and I tried to carry it tandem, but one would slip and drag down the other, and little headway was made. On a perpendicular slope we halted and I skinned out the head, mainly by feel. The head with the flesh on it must have weighed twenty pounds. I hung it like a pendant round my neck. With our mufflers we slung the skin about Noorpay and once more got under way. We struggled along with frequent halts. Part of the time we walked upright, except for frequent falls among the rocks; up the steeper bits we crawled on hands and knees. It was after eleven before we won our way back to the ponies, but fortunately the threatening rain had held off until we were mounted. At half past twelve we rode into camp and tumbled from our saddles to thaw ourselves round a blazing fire of spruce logs, and recount our adventures to the sleepy men who had rolled out of their blankets when they heard us coming.

In the morning Khalil was feeling too done up to go out so I took two Kazaks and went off to look into the matter of the possible second bear. Noorpay had been right; there had been two, and we followed the one I had first wounded for three-quarters of a mile down the ravine below where the other had fallen. The trail was most difficult, and at length it was lost, even to Kasin's sharp eyes. We made futile casts in every direction, but at last we had to abandon the chase.

A few days later we both took the dogs out, thinking that if the wounded bear were still alive we might pick up its fresh trail. Either it or another had been working about in the nullah bottom, for Lead immediately showed interest. He and Rollic puzzled a trail out for a short distance, but it was evidently too stale to follow through to a successful conclusion.

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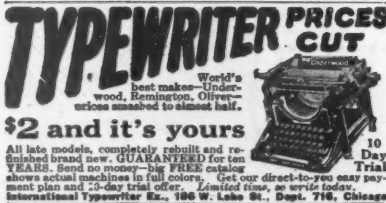
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## Every Other Thursday (Continued from page 39)

terrified, and uncomprehending, all at once. Again, articulating painfully with tongue, teeth, palate: "What—is—a—frog, Miss Seppala?"

Much gabbling and hissing from those all about her. Suddenly a great light envelops Miss Seppala. She bounces up.

"A frock iss an animal wiss legs iss jumping all the time and iss green." Triumph!

The lesson went on to say, "Dragon-flies are called darnin-needles." Miss Speiser, the blond, good-natured, spectacled teacher, spoke upper West Side New York English. "Aw dawhning needles hawmful?" she inquired. The result was that Helmi's English accent turned out to be a mixture of early Finnish and late Bronx most mystifying to the hearer. Still, it had served.

And now, a year later, her hair was bobbed, and her clothes were American, and she said, "I'll tell the world," and got twenty dollars each week at the Mawsons'. She had paid back her passage money down to the last cent, so now Anni, in one of her tempers, could never again call her a dirty Lapp—that insult of insults to the Finn or Swede. She had learned with amazing swiftness to prepare American dishes, being a naturally gifted cook. She knew how to serve from the left, to keep the water glasses filled, not to remove the service plates until the dinner plates were at hand, to keep thumb-marks off glass salad dishes, to mix a pretty good Bronx cocktail. She was, in short, an excellent middle-class American servant—spunky, independent, capable, unfriendly.

It was a long trip from West Eighty-sixth Street to Finntown, in Brooklyn, where Abel and Anni lived. Helmi begrudged the time this afternoon, but she went out of a sense of duty, and custom, and a certain tribal loyalty. Anni's house was a neat two-story brick, new, in West Forty-fourth Street, Brooklyn. The neighborhood was almost solidly Finnish. The houses were well kept, prosperous looking, owned by Finn carpenters, mechanics, skilled workmen, whose wage was twelve, fourteen, sixteen dollars a day. One of Anni's boys, Otto, aged four, was playing outside in the bit of yard. He eyed his aunt coolly, accepted a small sack of hard candies which she presented to him, followed her into the house, which she entered at the rear.

Anni was busy at her housework. Anni was always busy at her housework. Anni was twenty-seven and looked thirty-five. Between the two women no love was lost, but today their manner toward each other was indefinably changed. Helmi was no longer the debtor. Helmi was an independent and free woman, earning her twenty a week. Anni was a married woman, bound, tied, harried by a hundred household tasks and trials. The two talked in their native tongue.

"Well, how goes it?"

"Always the same. You are lucky. You have your day off, you can run out and have a good time."

"She wanted me to stay home today and go tomorrow instead. I soon showed her and that daughter of hers."

They went into that in detail. Their pale blue eyes were triumphant.

"You are early today. Did you eat?"

"No. Coffee only."

"I'll fix you some *kaalikääreitä* left over from the children's lunch."

Helmi cast a glance of suspicion at her suddenly suave sister-in-law but she pulled a chair up to the kitchen table and ate the savory stuffed cabbage with a good appetite. She had had no Finnish food for almost two weeks. It was good.

Well, she must be going. Going? Already? Where was she running? Helmi supped up the last of the gravy on her plate and rose. Oh, she had much to do! Well, now you are so independent I suppose you will spend all your money. Yes, and suppose I do? What then? Nothing, only Abel is so close with his

money. I wish I had a dollar or two of my own to spend. I need so many things. Helmi gave her three dollars, grudgingly. She would do this again and again during the year. She was wild to be gone. She went into the bedroom to look at the baby; powdered her nose; drank a final and hasty cup of coffee and was off. Anni watched her go, her eyes hard.

A long, long ride this time back to New York. Grand Central. Change. The East Side subway. She was spewed up with the crowd at 125th Street; plunged vigorously into its colorful, cheerful hurly-burly. A hundred noises attracted her. A hundred sights lured her. But she knew what she wanted to do. She made straight for the shop where Lempi Parta had bought her dress. Bulging, glittering plate-glass windows brilliant with blues and pinks and reds and gold. We pay highest prices for Liberty bonds and War Savings Stamps.

Helmi entered. The place was full of girls like herself, with bobbed hair and flat faces and broad shoulders and pale blue eyes. Upper East Side Finland was buying its Easter finery. A woman came forward—an enormous woman with an incredible bust, and a measureless waist, and bead trimming, and carrot-colored hair. And what can I do for you, miss? Helmi made known her wants. The woman emitted a vocal sound; a squawk.

"Miss S.! Oh, Miss S.! Step this way . . . The young lady here wants you should show her something in a Alice-blue crepe."

You did not pay for it all at once, of course. You paid in part, and they took your name and address and the name of the people you worked for. (Helmi used to be most demanding about the accent over the *a's* in Seppala, but she was no longer.) But they obligingly let you take the whole ravishing outfit; Alice-blue dress; blue coat lined with sand crepe and trimmed with embroidery and edged with a collar of fur; Alice-blue silk hat; beige silk stockings, very sheer; strapped slippers. She hung the boxes and bundles about herself, somehow, joyously. Miss S. was most gracious.

Into the five and ten cent store. A mass of people surged up and down the aisles. They buffeted and banged Helmi's boxes, but she clung to them rigidly. A handkerchief, edged with blue lace. A small flask of perfume. A pocket comb that cunningly folded up on itself. An exhausting business, this shopping. More tiring than a day's housework. She stopped at an unspeakable counter and ordered and devoured a sandwich of wieners with mustard (10c) and a glass of root beer (5c). Thus refreshed, she fought her way out to the street.

It was mid-afternoon. She walked placidly up 125th Street, enjoying the sights and sounds. Her strong arms made nothing of their burden. Music blared forth from the open door of a radio shop. She stopped to listen, entranced. Her feet could scarcely resist the rhythm. She wandered on, crossed the street. "Heh! Watch it!" yelled a tough taxi driver, just skimming her toes. He grinned back at her. She glared after him; gained the curb. A slim, slick, dark young fellow leaning limply against the corner cigar store window spoke to her, his cigaret wagging between his lips.

"Watch your step, Swensky."

"Shod op!" retorted Helmi haughtily.

An open-faced orange drink booth offered peppermint taffy in ten-cent sacks. Helmi bought a sack and popped one of the sticky confections between her strong yellow teeth. A fake auction, conducted by a swarthy and Oriental-looking auctioneer, held her briefly. He was auctioning a leprous and swollen Chinese vase. A dollar! A dollar! Who offers a dollar? All right. Who says fifty cents! Twenty-five! Step inside. Come inside, lady, won't you? Don't stand like that in the door. She knew better than that; was on her way. Yet the vase would have looked lovely in a parlor. Still, she had no parlor.



Her pale eyes grew dreamy. She walked more quickly now. When she approached the Finnish Progressive Society building in 126th Street there was the usual line of surprisingly important-looking cars parked outside. That portion of New York's Finnish chauffeurdom which had Thursday afternoon to itself was inside playing pool, eating in the building's restaurant, or boxing or wrestling in the big gymnasium. The most magnificent car of them all was not there. Helmi knew it would not be. Vaino was free on Thursday nights at ten.

Her boxes and bundles in hand, Helmi passed swiftly through the little groups that stood about in the hallway. A flood of Finnish rose to her ears, engulfed her. She drew a long breath. Through the open doorway of the restaurant at the rear. The tables were half filled. Girls eating together. Men, with their hats on, eating together. She ordered a cup of coffee and a plate of Finnish bread—hardtack—*näkki leipä*—with its delicious pungent caraway. This she ate and drank quickly, with a relish. The real joy of the day lay still ahead of her.

Into the hallway again and down a short flight of steps to the basement. Through the pool-room, murky with smoke, every table surrounded by pliant, plastic figures intent on the game. The men paid no attention to her, nor she to them. Through the door at the far end of the room. A little office. Down a flight of steps. The steam bath, beloved of every Finn.

All her life Helmi had had her steam bath not only weekly but often two or three times a week. On the farm in Finland the bath-house had been built before the farmhouse itself. You used the bath-house not only for purposes of cleanliness, but for healing, in illness, when depressed. The Finnish woman, in the first throes of childbirth, repaired to the soothing, steam-laden atmosphere of the bath-house. The sick were carried there. In its shelves and on its platforms you lay dreamily for hours, your skin shining and slippery with water. The steam bath was not only an ablution, it was a ceremony, a rite.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays the Finnish Society's steam baths were used only by women. The bath woman, huge, blond, genial, met her, took her fifty cents, gave her a locker. Helmi opened her precious boxes and hung her finery away, carefully, lovingly. The room was full of naked girls. They were as lacking in self-consciousness as so many babies. They crowded round her—her friend Lempi Parta, and, too, Hilja Karbin, Saara Johnson, Matti Eskolin, Aili Juhola.

"Oh, Helmi! How beautiful! How much did you pay! The boys will dance with you tonight, all right!" they cried in Finnish.

She disrobed swiftly, and stood a moment in the moist warmth of that outer room. Her body was strong and astonishingly graceful, now rid of its cheap and bungling clothes. Her waist tapered slim and flexible below the breadth of the shoulders. She walked well. Now she went into the steam-room. The hot breath of the place met her. She lifted her face to it, enchanted. She loved it. The air was thick, heavy with steam from the hot water that dropped endlessly down onto the hot steam-pipes below, sending up a misty cloud. From out of this veil a half-dozen indolent heads were lifted from bunks that lined the walls. On each bunk lay an undraped figure.

Helmi sat a moment on the edge of a bunk. "Hello! Hello, Elli! How goes it, Mari? Oh, this is good!"

She reclined upon the bunk, gratefully, yieldingly. Every nerve, every fiber, every muscle of her being relaxed in this moist heat. This stolid Finn servant-girl became a graceful plastic figure in repose, a living Greek statue. The mist enveloped her. Her eyes closed. So she lay for fifteen minutes, twenty, a half-hour. Out, then, with Lempi and a half-dozen others, into the cold green waters of the big pool, stopping first for a moment under a shower in the room adjoining the steam bath.



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One after another they stood at the pool's edge, graceful, fearless, unaffected. This bath, to them, was a sacred institution. It was an important and necessary part of their lives. They dropped then, swiftly, beautifully, flashingly, into the pool's green depths. They swam like mermaids. They had learned to swim in the icy waters of the Finland lakes. Their voices were high and clear and eager, like the voices of children at play. They were relaxed, gay, happy. "Oo, look! Look at me!" they called to each other in Finnish. "Can you do this?"

Back, dripping, into the steam-room again. Another half-hour. The shower again. The pool again. Helmi gave herself over to the luxury of a massage at the expert hands of the masseuse. The strong electric human fingers kneaded her flesh, spanked her smartly, anointed her with oils. She felt blissful, alive, new-born. The Mawson kitchen did not exist. Zhoolie Mawson was a bad dream. Mrs. Mawson did not matter—never had mattered. Vaino. Vaino only.

She was so long in donning the beautiful Alice-blue finery that Lempi and the rest became impatient. But at last it was finished. She surveyed herself radiantly. The flat Finnish face glowed back at her from the mirror. Helmi could never be pretty. But she approached it as nearly now as she ever would.

She would not curl her hair now. That she would do after she had had her supper. She was ravenously hungry.

They would not eat at the building restaurant. They were tired of it. They would go to Mokki's, on Madison, just off 125th. A real Finnish meal. Here they sat at a table for four and talked and laughed in subdued tones, as does your proper Finnish girl. And they ate! Mrs. Mawson would have opened her eyes. They ate first *marja soppa*, which is an incredible soup of cranberries and cornstarch and sugar. They had *mämmi* and cream. They had salt herrings with potatoes. They had *riisi puuro*, which is, after all, little more than rice pudding, but flavored in the Finnish manner. They drank great scalding cups of coffee. It was superb to see them eat.

It was nearly eight. Helmi must still curl her hair, carefully. This you did in the women's room at the Finnish Society's building. She scanned the line of motors at the curb for the great car—no, it was not there. That was as it should be. The hair-curling business took a half-hour. The room was full of girls changing their shoes; changing their stockings; changing their dresses; combing their hair, curling it; washing.

Helmi and Lempi were going to the play that was given in the theater two flights up. Another fifty cents. Helmi did not begrudge it. She loved to dance, but she would wait. She would be fresh for ten o'clock. At ten, though the play would not be finished, she would leave for the dance up-stairs. She shut her ears determinedly to the music that could faintly be heard when the door opened to admit late-comers. The play was presented by members of the Finnish Society's theatrical group, made up of girls like Helmi and boys like Vaino. Helmi watched it absorbedly. It was, the program told you in Finnish, "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." Helmi and Lempi found it fascinating and true and convincing.

Ten o'clock. They vanished. They deserted

Thalia for Terpsichore. They spent another ten minutes before the dressing-room mirrors. The dance-hall was crowded. Rows of young men, stolid of face, slim, appraising, stood near the door and grouped at the end of the room, partnerless, watching the dancers. Straight as a shot Helmi's eyes found him. How beautiful he was in his blue suit and his shiny tan shoes! His hair shone like his shoes. His cold blue eyes met hers. Her expression did not change. His expression did not change. Yet she knew he had marked her blue dress, and her sheer silk stockings, and her new strapped slippers.

Wordlessly, she and Lempi began to dance together. Lempi took the man's part. She was very strong and expert. She whirled Helmi around and around in the waltz so that her Alice-blue skirt billowed out, and one saw her straight, sturdy, slim legs to the knees. Her skirt swished against the line of stolid-faced boys as she whirled past; swished against Vaino's dear blue-serge legs. She did not look at him, yet she saw his every feature. He did not look at her. He saw the dress, the stockings, the slippers, the knees. True Finns.

The waltz was over. Soberly and decorously Helmi and Lempi sought chairs against the wall. They conversed in low tones. Helmi did not look at him. Five minutes. The band struck up again. The German polka. He stood there a moment. All about were stolid young men advancing stolidly in search of their equally stolid partners. Helmi's heart sank. She looked away. He came toward her. She looked away. He stood before her. He looked at her. She rose. Wordlessly his great hand clasped her waist. Wordlessly they danced. One, two, three, and a one, two, three, and turn, and turn, and turn and turn. She danced very well. His expression did not change. Her expression did not change. She was perfectly, blissfully happy.

At twelve it was over. At twelve-fifteen she had deposited her boxes and bundles—the every-day clothes of Cinderella—in the back of the huge proud car that had an engine like a locomotive. She was seated in the great proud car beside Vaino. She was driven home. She was properly kissed. She would see him Thursday. Not Thursday, but Thursday. He understood. Every other Thursday.

The day was over. She let herself into the Mawson apartment, almost (but not quite) noiselessly. Mrs. Mawson, sharp-eared, heard her. Zhoolie, herself just returned and not so unhappy as she had been sixteen hours earlier, but still resentful, heard her. Helmi entered her own untidy little room, quickly shut the window which Mrs. Mawson had opened, took off the Alice-blue dress, kicked off the tight new strapped slippers, peeled the silk stockings (a hole in each toe), flung her underwear to the winds, dived into the coarse cotton nightgown and tumbled into her lumpy bed with a weary, satisfied, rapturous grunt.

Zhoolie, in her green enamel bed, thought bitterly: "Stupid lump! Went and sat at her sister's, or whatever it is, all day, swigging coffee. It isn't as if she had had anything to do, really. She didn't do a thing. Not a thing! And I've given her I don't know how many pairs of my old silk stockings."

Mrs. Mawson, in her walnut bed, thought, "They're all alike."

Mr. James G. Mawson slept.

## God Gave Me 20 Cents (Continued from page 61)

people were, how stupid—going on with roasts and vegetables—and Steve gone—never coming back!

How odd it is—the little mole-eyed world we live in! A woman picking out beef—such an important thing, this piece or that piece! And a little girl hurrying past to die!

Nearer the wharves came that smell of salt water, gas-lights, long sheds, hoarse whistles, chugging freight boats. Someone came into

the street with an armful of flowers—warm, cool smell of flowers—and Mary saw a window where flowers were for sale, all kinds of flowers, trailing vines, purple lilies—and roses—"Roses twenty cents" it said—roses—Steve and the Mardi Gras . . .

"Steve, why did you come back?"

"Because that night, with that rose, you were so beautiful I had to come back. I couldn't forget you."

She touched a rose that bent against the window.

"If I had twenty cents"—she caught her hands against her lips—poor little mind groping back to happiness—"for roses just this once again—if I only had twenty cents—" Almost sobbing, she went on in the dark past wharf sheds, weak yellow lights, odd shadows—saying over and over like a machine that stumbles on one place, "twenty cents—twenty cents—twenty cents . . ."

A watchman was down there, an old man with an old lantern, in a dim shed, his lamp burning crookedly; the chimney smoked.

He saw her peering in his window. Had the John Burns gone to Hongkong? Yes. Did he know Cassie Lang? He wagged his head. When he seen her—yes. Steve Doren? Big Steve? Yes. Had Cassie gone—with Steve Doren? Well, he did see her with him—carryin' a lump o' clothes—yes.

He was drinking coffee out of a bucket. He didn't watch her or follow her. She went on farther—water rocking in against the wharf posts—dim lights like ghosts of lights. Suddenly she was afraid. She couldn't wait any longer! She couldn't *think* any longer! She sat down against a post—caught a rope that was around it—felt the water touching her feet—looked to be sure the old man wasn't coming; and then—almost by her hand, by that rope there—was twenty cents! Two dimes pressed by feet down into the soggy wood. She stared at them, picked them up, held them—two dimes! All she had wished for, had asked for, had *prayed* for! Go back to buy roses when she was going to die! What a foolish thing! Go back to buy roses—but it was for Steve! And she'd prayed for twenty cents, and here was twenty cents. Would she dare not go back? Would she *dare* not go back?

So Mary Doren went back to those roses in the window, bought them for twenty cents, and went out into the street again along by the buildings again, across the shadows. Then she heard the door back in that flower stall thrown open, saw a shaft of light out over the sidewalk, and the man—with no hat, no coat—coming out, looking up and down the street. Almost at once he saw her, crowded against a high brick wall.

"Here!" he called. "Wait!"

He started after her! Why was he coming after her? She didn't know, but no one must stop her!

She kept along the wall close to the darkness, the man coming after her along the wall too! Frightened, she caught at the bricks, then suddenly almost *fell* into an open space—an areaway.

The man, running, was close behind her. He turned a flash-light ahead of him—saw the opening, the areaway, knew it was where she had stopped—where the sound of her feet had stopped. And he turned the flash squarely in that open space—that air shaft of a building checkered with a hundred dark windows, solid brick. No way out!

But there was nothing there—nobody!

Little mole-eyed worlds—woman picking out roasts; watchman drinking coffee in a bucket; Mrs. Snuck keeping baked beans warm—"Yes, as soon as there's a light I'll take them right over"; luggers shipping to Hongkong; sailors in Bigger's Cellar sprawling over tables; old Mrs. Tapman asleep in Cassie Lang's bed, dressing-jacket, old skirt; but suddenly someone pounding, beating on her door, keyhole rattling, latch sputtering—until in the streaked light of a flaring gas flame Mrs. Tapman woke startled, caught at the bedcovers, stared at the door.

"What's wanted?" she called out.

She reached for her shoes. No answer but that pounding again. She got up, shuffled across the room and opened the door. A man was there, in shabby clothes.

"You've got to come some place," he said; "somebody's shot!"

Mrs. Tapman caught at the door. "Barney! Is it Barney?"

She had a son. A boy who was twenty-two. "I don't know nothing," the man said, "only that I was sent for you."

She went with him down the street, catching her dress at the neck, her hands shaking, her face yellow; followed him into the grime of an alley, out on a street, across to a high brick wall, through a gaping crowd gathered around the door of a building and inside the building, where he took her through a hallway, past heavy closed doors, to a room in which a dozen men, silent, sullen, were standing with a police guard—and on the floor, stark-white, Barney Tapman—and somebody else—a girl—tumbled curls—broken roses caught by their thorns on her dress—the floor stained with thick dark red!

Mrs. Tapman knelt heavily, sobs choking her, and put her hands on Barney's face. Doctors came—white coats—stretchers—took the two away. Barney was hurt, but he wasn't dead, the girl wasn't dead, and they said another who'd been taken away first wasn't dead.

The safe had uncut jewels in it, and jade brought over on the Orient Line. A policeman told Mrs. Tapman the trouble had been because Barney had shot an officer, and the girl, who had been found hiding in an air shaft, had tried to get away.

Such a white room—such a white bed—such white things—white people coming, going—a window full of the leaves of a tree. But all of it somehow over the bakery, with a smell of steaming bread, socks to mend, Steve playing solitaire on the table, laughing and snapping the cards down by the corners—"All the aces tryin' to kid me!"—Tom Snuck coming upstairs.

Then again it was ship deck at night and a thousand stars—a thousand, million, trillion stars—white walls, white sky, and a million stars—Steve sitting there with Cassie Lang, snapping stars down by the corners. But the ship was too far for good-by now! She could never see the smoke of it now! Sea-gulls or wind could never find him now! Even the ocean would not be near to him now! Nothing was near but Cassie Lang—Cassie Lang . . .

Shall we send for anybody? the doctor had asked. No. You haven't any people? No.

Somebody wants to come to see you. Mrs. Tapman wants to come to see you. Mrs. Tapman. Who is that? Why should anybody come or not come?—Steve is gone just the same.

But when Mrs. Tapman had asked about the little girl who had been shot they had told her.

So Mrs. Tapman came and sat by her bed. She didn't have any folks? Well, that was too bad. Was she in pain? No? Did she want anything? No? Such little hands. The covers should be smoothed out! Barney couldn't stand a wrinkle in the covers. Barney'd got in bad company. He'd be good, though, if they'd give him another chance now. Maybe when Mary got in a wheel-chair she'd come to see Barney. He was so restless and lonesome.

One day, then, Mrs. Tapman took Mary in a wheel-chair to the ward where Barney was. He shrugged his shoulders.

"What's the use of me gettin' well when there's cops for me outside anyway? *She's* the lucky one." He jerked his thumb to the next bed.

A girl was there—pale, still as a wax image, hands transparent, it seemed—so white—eyes closed, lips barely moving with her breath.

"It was her who was on the lookout," Barney said. "It was her the cops got first. She's lucky—passin' in her checks. They won't send *her* no place!" He brushed his hand across his eyes. "She's a square kid," he said. "Took the shot so we could get away. Maybe you heard of her before—Cassie Lang."

Mrs. Tapman scuffed frightened along the silent rubber floor of the hall.

"Hurry," she gasped, "the little girl from up-stairs has fainted!"

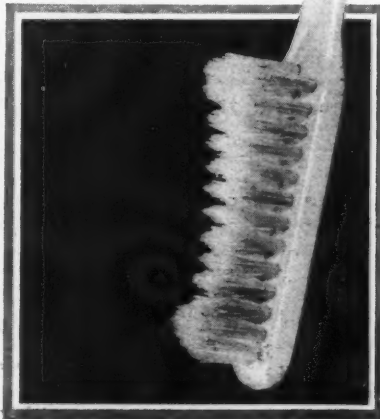
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So Steve had not taken Cassie Lang after all! Not on the deck under the stars after all! Not laughing down at her, teasing her after all! Little mole-eyed worlds! Cassie Lang almost beyond the gate, and Mary's heart tumbling, throbbing with joy. Now the dreams would be real and the real only dreams! Oh, the cobweb line between!

So Mrs. Tapman found out who she was then. Steve Doren's little wife. And Cassie Lang asked to see her.

Mary was afraid to go. It seemed wicked to go—she so happy, and Cassie Lang almost beyond the gate. It seemed wicked to go to Cassie Lang now and be tumbling with joy.

Cassie looked a long time at Mary's face. Mary held Cassie's hand in both of hers.

"I wanted to ask you," Cassie said, her voice almost a whisper, "to tell Steve I'm sorry I wasn't on the level. I knew he didn't want to take me, but it seemed like I had to go. He hated me when he found what I did, but ask him to forgive me. Tell him I never played a game crooked before, but it seemed like I—had to go this time—"

One day Mary Doren, over the bakery, working around the house—that smell of warm, steaming bread from below!—heard Steve Doren coming up-stairs. She shut her eyes not to see him too soon—put her hand over her lips not to cry out loud. He held her,

clung to her, kissed her, rocked her in his arms. He'd been ashamed to come back for good-by that day, but every minute had been only her worn shoes—her eyes in the torchlight—her hair with a rose in it.

She hurried and set the table for supper. They went down together for *küchen*; there were people waiting, a man and woman talking about nothing—yes, the day had been too warm today. Then the man saw Mary—looked at her—looked at her—then he crossed to where she was.

"Was it you came into my place one night and bought roses for twenty cents?" he asked. That night coming back again!

"Yes," she said. "Why did you come into the street and follow me?"

He looked at her oddly, fumbled in his pocket, and brought out two dimes. "I went after you," he said, "to find out what you were doing with money like this."

Mary stared. Steve reached for the coins—held them in the light—exclaimed softly.

"How did you get these, sweetheart?" he asked a little sharply.

Her eyes filled with tears. "I prayed," she said, "and God gave me twenty cents."

Steve handed them back to the man with the basket.

"Cassie Lang threw those dimes away on the wharf when I went to Hongkong," he said.

I prayed—and God gave me twenty cents! Mysterious way of wonders!

Cassie Lang, the rag of Yarm Street, and a pair of dimes—with heads on both sides!

## 3000 Songs (Continued from page 47)

would take the song and gave us the "ten-spot." That song was "My Old New Hampshire Home"—and we had sold all our rights to this hit for \$15.

But I stuck to it. A little later I, along with Sterling, wrote "You'll Get All That's Coming to You," which we sold for an advance of \$10 and a royalty on each copy sold.

No one can realize what an important step that was. There were no immediate royalties but it marked the beginning.

For a year or two more I wrote songs—and earned my living playing in vaudeville. Then came "I'd Leave Ma Happy Home for You"—for which I wrote both words and music in less than an hour. Blanche Ring, who was just beginning to be known, sang it at Tony Pastor's and both Blanche and the song became great hits.

A few months later, while I was running an office in Chicago for Shapiro, I met Arthur Lamb, who handed me the lyrics for a song and asked me if I would write the melody. I did, and the song will still be recalled by the old-timers—"A Bird in a Gilded Cage."

It was the key that opened the door of wealth and fame for me—the door that had for so many years been locked and barred against me. During the next twelve months I wrote "I Want to be the Leading Lady," "When the Band Begins to Play," "I Ain't A-goin' to Weep No More," "My Jersey Lily," and "Whoa, Bill." I was a partner in my own business and I was establishing a record because of my new methods of exploiting songs and because I was giving the singers and the public the kind of songs they wanted.

However, things were not going entirely according to my notion in the firm with which I was now connected, so on December 23, 1901, I dissolved partnership. On my own again, I at once wrote "On a Sunday Afternoon," and a little later I knocked out on a special order, "Down Where the Wurzbarger Flows"—which Nora Bayes, at that time unknown, introduced.

I had now arrived in the big time. I was turning out such popular hits as "Under the Anheuser Bush" and "Eliza Jane," and then in quick succession I wrote a number of "coon" songs—"What You Goin' to Do When the

Rent Comes Round?" "Alexander, Don't You Love Your Baby No More?" "Moving Day," and "Abraham Jefferson Lee."

Then, following a trip to England, came the song that I love more than any I have ever written—"Wait 'till the Sun Shines, Nellie." To me it was my peak. My long and never-ceasing fight to follow my youthful ambition had been won.

At one time I had a comfortable fortune of \$250,000. Bad ventures and changes in the song publishing business which I refused to follow, swept away this fortune and several others that my songs have made for me.

Most of the present songs I deplore. Songs of the suggestive and ultra-jazz caliber may indeed sell to a certain class of people but no one can convince me that good American mothers and fathers in this country wish to have their children sing them or bring them home.

After all, middle-aged folks who want clean songs are the best music buyers. They are unusually fond of story songs that mean something to them. But most of the song writers of today are forgetting about these older people and are building their lyrics around tunes, instead of trying to make lyric and melody blend perfectly. All the big hits of fifteen or twenty years ago had a real idea back of them—lyrics and melodies that both lingered, and, incidentally, were not manufactured or stolen from others.

Today, just as in the old days, a natural melody writer who obtains his idea for a song and is capable of writing the lyric for it is pretty sure to produce the really big hit. Most of the great hits, by the way, were written within an hour after the big idea popped into the composer's head.

And now at the end of my story I just want to tell young ambitious song writers that the way to get to the top is simply to climb there by perseverance and determination. Come to New York, where the battling is the hardest—and if you have talent and faith in yourself nothing can stop you.

Before long there is bound to be a big change in the song business. We will again have tent music—retailed through the great chain and department stores. And we will again have



"natural" hits that will sweep the country and stay forever in men's hearts.

Today America is dance crazy and the public have been too busy releasing jazz tunes to think of issuing songs that will appeal to the heart and home. But the change is coming and before long we shall have a return of the popular song that strikes deep into the heart and not simply at the feet and will be made popular by the singer instead of the jazz orchestra.

I know there are millions who, like me, want to hear songs of the old type come back—and who would rejoice to hear the street-corner quartets again singing "When the Harvest Days Are over, Jessie Dear," and "On the Banks of the Wabash Far Away."

I know they would again like to hear sweet-hearts on moonlight nights on the river singing, "I Want a Girl just like the Girl that Married Dear Old Dad"; and crowds on the street-cars singing "On a Sunday Afternoon," and "In the Good Old Summer-Time"; and the kids on the streets whistling and singing "Wait 'till the Sun Shines, Nellie."

When that happy time comes we will know that the days of hard commercialism in the popular song world have vanished and that the good old songs of real sentiment are back again.

## The Understanding Heart

(Continued from page 83)

Uncle Charley's tip and scrape the bottom of every well in Honey Valley for those empty cartridge shells and that pistol. Then I'm going to find Bob Mason's wife and jump the truth out of her when she sees those empty shells and the rusty pistol. If she won't admit it and I can't read the number on the gun, we've got to trace that minin' engineer's career every place he's ever lived, examine the records of all the hardware stores an' see can we connect him up with the ownership of such a gun.

"Then, with new evidence, we make a motion for a new trial, the Supreme Court maybe grants it, I testify to finding the gun and cartridges, an' prove the deceased did once own such a gun; then we spill Uncle Charley's dyin' tale, raise a reasonable doubt in the minds of the jurors an' get a verdict of acquittal. The jury'll be hand-p'cked this time and that'll be your job. They'll figure Bob has suffered enough, anyhow, an' turn him loose."

"That is a reasonable hypothesis, Sheriff," Garland agreed.

"Reasonable? Why, it's sound as a twenty-dollar gold piece, an' if it ain't we'll make it so. Let me tell you something, young feller. Whenever I tackle a job I tackle it with a winnin' sperrit, no matter how impossible it appears, an' it'd surprise you the number o' times I win out. Take, for instance, that boy I was takin' down to get hung. I knew he oughtn't to swing, but do you think I wasted any time tryin' to sell the governor that philanthropic idear? Nary bit. I'm the Republican county committeeman from our county; nobody was fool enough to run against me at the last election, on account of me bein' satisfactory to Siskiyou County an' to hell with political parties. I got political power in my county an' the governor knew it. So I just told him I was main set on savin' this boy an' would remember the favor at the next general election if so be he could see his way clear to be kind, an' if he couldn't I'd remember it anyhow! I put it all on a personal basis, an' that's what I'm goin' to do in the case of Bob Mason."

"You're a lot better than those that talk about you," Garland assured him, returning the sheriff's rough compliment. "Well, you'd better get down off Bogus while you have daylight. I shall remain here to help Monica with

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Bob and the baby, although you needn't mention that fact to the chief ranger as you pass headquarters. The Forest Service telephone-lines are down, and if he cannot communicate with me he'll assume I'm on the job. What he doesn't know will not worry him!"

Ten minutes later Sheriff Bentley mounted the ranger's horse and rode away. Near the lone mountain-pine down in the Meadows he found the wretched Baldy grazing. Rain-water collecting in little depressions had furnished him with drink. He was stiff and sore, but not fondered, although to the practised eye of the sheriff it was apparent that he had lost weight. His thick hide had resisted the burns rather well, however, and after making a careful examination his owner rode on, satisfied that a week in that green meadow was the best thing he could prescribe for the jaded animal. The saddle, bridle and blanket he cached up in the mountain-pine until he could pick them up on his return trip. He knew that his posse—if they had not, indeed, already done so—would see Baldy in the Meadows on their way out of the San Dimas, recognize him and report his presence to his owner, but Bentley would have a story to account for the animal's condition. What the posse did not know was that Bob Mason was responsible for it, and therein the gods had been kind to Sheriff Bentley. He decided he had got out of a disagreeable situation with his reputation unsullied and his honor untarnished.

Back on Bogus Anthony Garland made shift to bathe Bob Mason, anoint his burns with picric acid and dress them with absorbent cotton, antiseptic bandages and adhesive tape. With the air thus excluded from the raw areas, the patient's suffering decreased materially, although with the stoicism of his breed he had uttered no word or sign of the physical torture he was undergoing. When his ragged, burned clothing had been stripped from him there were no garments at the lookout station to replace them; he lay under the blankets naked and uneasy, his anxious glance fixed on the door opening into the living-room, where Monica sat caring for the baby.

"Now, then," the ranger announced cheerfully when the last bandage was in place, "I have a notion you'll pull through and make a hand yet."

"I wish I could die, Ranger. Somehow, I don't appear to have any luck lately."

"Your luck has changed, old settler. Last night while Uncle Charley was unburdening his soul of its heavy secret I looked out on the night and saw the Bob Mason star in the ascendency. I can almost guarantee you that you'll not go back to San Quentin penitentiary."

The man shook his head. "My liberty costs too high a price," he replied sadly.

"What do you mean? It will cost you nothing. I was a lawyer before ill-health forced me to seek a life in the open and I chose the Forest Service. I'm as husky as a three-year-old steer now—and I'm still a lawyer—and not a dull one, either, if I do say so myself. I'm going to handle your appeal, without charge. I'll induce the Supreme Court to grant a motion for new trial in your case; I will then present my newly discovered evidence, the Supreme Court will grant you a new trial and I will defend you. And when I take on that task your fate will not be in the hands of a simple, trusting, unsophisticated cow-county lawyer, overawed in the presence of imported opposing counsel: I'll pick the jury this time; I'll talk to that jury and when I have a subject with heaps of human appeal in it, I'm the bright boy who can pull out the *vox humana* stop and make a jury weep."

"Oh, you can, can you?" There was irony in Mason's tones. "Well, you haven't got any new evidence, have you?"

"No, but I'll bet a dollar to a doughnut we'll find it."

"If you do I'll never permit you to use it. I'll rise in my place and plead guilty first. Man, I took Kelcey Harrington for good or for bad, for better or for worse; I knew what I was doing when I passed my word to love, cherish, honor and protect her until death us did part—and I aim to keep my bargain. I'll not have the mother of my son disgraced."

"You old-fashioned idiot! Why, the woman has divorced you and deserted her baby. She's unnatural!"

"She was my wife and she bore me a son!"

"Mason, don't be such a Don Quixote—"

"I'd be a coyote to put that girl up on the stand and bully her into admitting something that would ruin her and perhaps put her in San Quentin for conspiracy. I know the temper of that judge and the temper of the men who would compose the jury that would try her. If she should be proved guilty, pitiless cold justice would be her portion. I couldn't stand that, I tell you."

"You love her still?"

"No. But I don't hate her. I understand her. People do the things they're weak enough to do—and if they're weak it isn't their fault. The buck is up to the Almighty in her case!"

"I think it is up to Him in your case. For a decent gentleman you have certainly had a scoundrel's brand run on you."

Mason smiled a cryptic little smile. "Not in the eyes of my friends, Ranger—and the public doesn't matter. The public doesn't know me and never did; when it heard about me it was mildly interested for a few minutes and has since forgotten me. Even the penitentiary is bearable if one's friends remain affectionate and loyal."

"Monica didn't forget you, I'm sure."

"She has always written to me once a week and has sent me books and magazines."

"How much better off you would have been if you had married her!"

"And how much worse off you would be now if I had!"

"My dear man, you jump to hasty conclusions—"

"If I do I land squarely on them. I have eyes. I am not a fool."

Anthony Garland sat down on the bed beside the sick man. "You love Monica Dale," he charged.

Mason nodded. "And, strangely enough, I never realized it until the gates of San Quentin had closed upon me. My poor wife was wiser than I—she knew me better than I knew myself. So did Monica, although after I married Kelcey, in a moment of infatuation, I saw very little of Monica. She wasn't welcome at Honey Valley." He sighed and closed his eyes. "Oh, Lord, what a pitiful mix-up. Monica and I have always been such friends. She was never the clinging-vine type. She has a lot of pride, scorns sympathy—"

"No, she doesn't. No woman ever does. You were content with a fine friendship, waiting, perhaps, until your economic situation should be more secure—and the golden moment passed. In contrasting her with Kelcey you realized you had traded pure gold for brass."

"Well, at any rate I missed my chance, if I ever had one, which I doubt. Monica doesn't want to marry a mountain-man. She wants to escape—to see life—to know all about the other side of the picture. I knew that. Perhaps if I had not—if I hadn't known that this was my country and that here I would live and die, I might have dared to dream . . . I didn't care to appear selfish. Everybody is entitled to have his or her desires fulfilled . . . Well, the girl loves you, Garland. You're the Man from Outside. She's fine and loyal and wonderful. Be tender and kind to her, friend."

Garland nodded silently. "I had no business to let her know. I'm just a poor devil of a ranger, making sufficient money for my simple needs," he murmured. "I do not thrive in cities and I haven't a dollar in the world to make another start in the law. No, it wasn't kind of me to wear my heart on my sleeve and let her see it."



"Don't be a fool," Mason warned him sharply. "Monica isn't mercenary. She'll follow where her heart leads and let what will come, come. Don't give her up. You're a decent man, or I'm no judge of men—and I think I am. I want a decent man for Monica. That girl was born to be happy, to bear strong, fine children and enrich the world. I know! After one has been herded for two years with the sweepings of humanity, he begins to realize why they are sweepings. They haven't been bred right. Monica comes of pioneer stock, the hardy and adventurous, the idealists, the builders. It was the men and women close to the soil who settled California, and of them it has been said that the cowards never started and the weaklings died on the way. We hill-folk are of nature's selective breeding. We haven't known ease; we have not wilted like hothouse flowers; we've been healthy and, living as we do, close to the soil, we think healthy thoughts.

"I know now that I should not have married Kelcey Harrington. She comes from a long line of decayed gentlemen; they've run to seed. Nature takes toll of the weak and inefficient, but she heaps her gifts on the strong, the clean and the brave—and money doesn't enter into her calculations. Prison has made of me a thinker and a philosopher. Nothing matters save the upbuilding and improvement of our species. How we foolish strong work and sacrifice to keep life in the scrubs of civilization, so they may produce more scrubs—on the blind, stupid theory that all God's chillun have wings! We expect the immoral and the amoral to have morals, and we keep them alive and punish them because they cannot perform prodigies of impossibility.

"Telephones, telegraphs, trains, motor-cars and airplanes deny us the privilege of walking or riding a horse to deliver a message. The pitifully few with genius give us automatic pianos, phonographs and radios and supply culture in quantity after the fashion of a mail-order house—so culture languishes for lack of exercise, for lack of birth pains; chaos is come because so few can think or care to try. Fool that I was, I married for the selfish desire for one woman and not for love of my race. I picked a weak mate—and my friends condemn her for my mistake—I, who should have known better! No, I'll not be hard on her. The poor, unhappy soul! I'm sorry for her."

Garland had listened with alert interest to this unexpected exposition of a jailbird's philosophy; in the presence of this man who dwelt in Gethsemane he felt little, futile and unworthy. Bob Mason resumed.

"Don't be civilized. Don't think about money—about your ability to massacre your species by marrying a woman to keep her in idleness, to deny her sufficient interest in life to make life worth the living. Don't make your wife mark time on the road to eternity, for if you do she'll hate you. Take the woman of your choice and take her for a mate, not a modern wife. Monica Dale will make the battle of life with you . . . Oh, yes, I know she's restless, that she thinks she wants a taste of a life she has never known. Marry her, man, and make her put her futile aspirations behind her. Give her children to think about—give her to perform a task that is never performed. She's lonely and afraid of life, if the truth were known. Oh, well, I suppose you know your own business, and I'm preaching. Forgive me for my egotism; talking helps me forget I'm mighty uncomfortable. You've been very kind to me, Garland; I owe you a debt I shall always be glad I can never repay. You're a human being, not a human animal."

"And is that why you want me to marry Monica, Bob?"

Mason nodded.

"Thank you."

"Are you going to do it?"

"Perhaps. I hope so."

"Cease dealing with yesterday and today. Think only of tomorrow. Make up your mind that you are."



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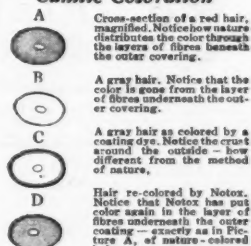
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"But Monica has something to say about that."

"You're wrong. She has nothing to say. No woman has the hardihood to withstand a clean, decent gentleman who will not be denied. Don't be civilized, I tell you. Take your woman! Find the mother of your children and then take her."

"I love Monica Dale," Mason went on softly, "but never would it be possible for me to give her the quality of love I gave to Kelcey Harrington. If I could be free again and my honor clean and untarnished, I would ask no greater blessing of God than to dwell with Monica the remainder of my days."

Garland was mystified. "I don't see how you and Monica came to miss each other so widely when your paths crossed so frequently. Bob, you weren't always as smart as you are now."

"We live and learn," said Bob Mason, "and most of us live a long time and learn slowly. I think I'll try to sleep. Go out into the living-room and keep Monica company. She's heavy-hearted over something and it isn't Uncle Charley. It isn't natural for youth to grieve when old age departs. Something is troubling her; presently I think she'll tell you what it is."

Anthony Garland was not destined, however, to be the recipient of Monica's confidence just then. Like most great souls she scorned to parade her troubles; she preferred silence now, as Garland instantly divined when he attempted to engage her in conversation, in the hope of diverting her mind from its gloomy channels. So he repaired to her kitchen and with the neatness and dispatch of his training set about the preparation of the evening meal. While peeling potatoes—a task singularly conducive to thought—it occurred to him that he was in for an unpleasant half-hour with Chief Ranger Casey. He would be on the carpet on two counts. He had abandoned his position as leader of the fire-fighters in his sector and by the time the sheriff should arrive with the nurse and relieve him of the responsibility of first assistant to Monica Dale he would have two and a half days of inexplicable absence from duty to explain to his superior. Casey would want to know why he had not put in his time reestablishing telephonic communication with the ranger headquarters and making arrangements for the rebuilding of the Tantrum Meadows station.

"Of course," he decided, "I can tell Casey I came up here to aid Monica Dale, found Uncle Charlie helpless on her hands and in common decency had to help her out. But that confounded busybody of a wife of his will check up on the elapsed time and suggest questions for her husband to ask me; and when it is discovered—as it is bound to be—that Monica had Bob Mason here, that I knew it and helped her care for him without reporting his presence to Casey, I imagine I'll be out of a job. I understand Casey is a martinet for discipline—Well, what is to be will be."

He glanced out into the living-room at the girl, slowly rocking the baby to sleep after having fed it. It occurred to him that her days with the Forest Service were numbered, should it be discovered that she had harbored Bob Mason. It seemed scarcely possible that the secret could be kept and Garland wondered what would become of her when the blow fell. To whom could she turn? Certainly not to him. Even if she should be willing to marry him, he lacked the courage to ask her to share the poverty that would be her lot as his wife.

"I dare say she hasn't enough funds to last her six months," he soliloquized. "She has the only position in this country she is qualified to hold, and if she loses that she will be helpless. In a city she could not survive save as a domestic servant. And she isn't the servant class. She has blood back of her. In a training-school for nurses she would probably find a refuge; she doesn't know anything of book-keeping or stenography, I'm sure, so she could not earn her living in an office. No, I cannot

ask her to marry me. She wants to escape from the San Dimas—and marriage with me would only be another shackle holding her in an environment which has grown repugnant to her. How terrible life is! How sad is the lot of some who deserve nothing but the happiness life should offer."

In his sympathy for her he forgot that his own life had been one long disappointment, due to poverty and ill-health, although, to do him full justice, he was not given to thinking overmuch of that. He was not a man who felt sorry for himself, and since his health had been restored he had felt a return of all the old ambitions; with them had come the feeling that the world was his oyster and, in due time, he would open it! He felt that abounding sense of independence, strength and resourcefulness that is ever the heritage of health and optimism—at least he had felt it until tonight, when, gazing upon Monica Dale, a realization of his inability to help her imbued him with a sense of desolation, of desperation, of futility. Brief as was their acquaintance, Garland had had aroused in him, at the inception of that acquaintance, the strong protective instinct that is as positive a characteristic in the male as is the mother instinct in the female; and when that protective instinct has once been aroused it is the forerunner of love—a love that will not readily die.

He sighed and shook his head. "Oh, Lord," he murmured, "get on the job!"

Intuitively he felt that eyes were upon him. He turned his head and saw Monica standing in the doorway gazing in at him. A little half smile was on her lovely lips, and in her brown eyes there glowed a lambent flame that set his pulse pounding wildly.

"Yes, it is a difficult position," she assured him. "You're worrying over me, are you not?"

He nodded gravely.

"I think that's so wonderful, Tony. You're the first human being who has ever forgotten his own interests long enough to worry over mine. Even my father and Uncle Charley never worried about me. In fact, they never worried about anything except dinner, when it was late. They always took me and my ability to care for myself for granted."

"My heart aches for you, Monica," Garland said it very simply, a declaration of fact rather than a passionate protestation. "I wish I could help you, but I can't. I'm hobbled."

"I'm not, Tony. I have four thousand dollars, so it doesn't matter much whether I retain my job on Bogus or not. Of course I didn't intend to leave for a year or two longer; I wanted to have five thousand dollars when I went down to the immense and contemptuous world, but in a pinch four thousand will do."

"Oh, I'm so glad, Monica. It's a tremendous relief to know that." He turned toward her eagerly. "And if you do not lose your position as lookout on Bogus, will you remain here for—a while?"

Her long lashes dropped over the wonderful eyes. "I'm not so anxious to leave the San Dimas now," she confessed. "It's not lonely any more."

"Still," he protested stubbornly, "I think it would be well for you to leave it. You're much too fine for this country. You have too much imagination, so you see too clearly, understand too readily and feel too deeply. Brains were made to be used—and you can't use them looking through a telescope for forest-fires."

"I might say the same of your job, Tony."

"It will be a long time before I can leave—unless I have to."

"And if you have to, Tony?"

"I shall not know what to do. Unlike you, I have no four thousand dollars. Up here one's wants are simple, but down there the battle of life is never-ending and a bit dirty. Monica, what are your plans?"

"I have none, Tony. I shall cross my bridges when I come to them. Yesterday I had plans—such huge, wonderful plans—and it seemed they would all come true."

But today they have vanished—fairly gifts fading away . . . Dear old Uncle Charley. If he had only lived five minutes longer!"

"I never knew a layman who didn't feel equal to the task of furnishing expert medical advice to a neighbor who had been shot or carved in a row he could have avoided by hiring a lawyer instead of making his own law." Anthony Garland's whimsical super-eyebrow was cocked a little higher. "If Uncle Charley's untimely demise has ruined your bright day-dreams, I'm sorry, but as a lawyer it is my duty to tell you that you are not competent to decide that question, because it is a question of law and that properly lies in my department. Suppose you tell me all about it, my dear."

"If Uncle Charley had lived long enough to sign his will I would have been his sole legatee, but now that he has died intestate his property will be administered by the Public Administrator. And since I know Uncle Charley has no relatives, his estate will go to the State of California. And it really belongs to me."

"Yes, I know he wanted to make you his sole legatee. He did, verbally, in the presence of Bob Mason, Sheriff Bentley, you and me."

"But he didn't make his mark in lieu of his signature."

Garland grinned. "Yes, that was very careless of the old man. The incident lends some color to the old copy-book maxim that procrastination is the thief of time. However, I make a guess that Uncle Charley's estate isn't worth one percent of the worry it's causing you. I doubt if his estate will be appraised at more than five hundred dollars."

"I don't regret the loss of his pack outfit, Tony. I could never use that. What troubles me is the fact that when Uncle Charley died, six hundred and forty acres of auriferous land which I thought I had inherited from my father was still standing on the county records as the property of Uncle Charley. My father bought this section from Uncle Charley and I dare say Uncle Charley gave him a deed, because I know father gave Uncle Charley five thousand dollars. My father always claimed that a prehistoric river channel ran through the heart of that section and that it was gold-bearing. Uncle Charley believed the property to be a section of country rock with some soil on top. They quarreled about it, so dad bought Uncle Charley out. Then they made up and dad helped Uncle Charley spend most of the five thousand dollars he had paid Uncle Charley for the land. They were partners, you see, and one always felt entitled to sixty or seventy percent of whatever the other possessed."

"And did your father neglect to file that deed for record?"

"Evidently. There is no record."

"Where is the deed?"

"I do not know. I have never seen it."

"When did you make this discovery?"

"Yesterday."

"But you knew, surely, that the deed was absolutely not in your possession."

"Of course I did. But I didn't worry about it because I thought it was down at Uncle Charley's cabin, among my father's papers. Uncle Charley thought so, too, after I told him I didn't have it and asked him if he did. He said he'd make a search for it some day. You see, dear Uncle Charley would never do today what he could postpone until tomorrow. Neither would my father—and I fear I have inherited some of my father's characteristics."

"But when your father died, did you not take immediate steps to apply for letters of administration on his estate?"

Monica shook her head. "There was no hurry about it," she replied wearily. "I regarded that section as indifferent grazing-land, and if I had applied for letters of administration that would have necessitated half a dozen trips to the county-seat to see a lawyer and confer with the judge—and I didn't have time for so many long journeys. I thought I'd wait until I left Bogus forever and went down—yonder to live."

"Who paid the taxes?"

"I did. The tax bills kept coming to Uncle

Charley and he'd send them up to me. I spoke to Uncle Charley about the bills coming to him, and he thought the county recorder was probably short of help and behind in his work, but that when he should catch up with his job the bills would be mailed to me."

"How did you discover the title to the land was still vested in Uncle Charley?"

Monica told him the story. "Uncle Charley didn't intimate to Mr. Thurlow that the property wasn't his. He agreed to sell the land for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, plus the income tax, planning to give the mining people a deed direct and indorse their check to me. The offer appeared, to him, too good to be true, and he wanted to close the deal immediately before the Hercules people should change their minds. The poor old dear was so excited he must have run all the way up from Dogwood Flats to tell me—and then the added excitement of the fire, the heat and his subsequent exertions overcame him. Realizing he was about to die, he tried to bequeath the property to me—and Azrael interfered at the last moment."

Her recital had imbued her with a more forcible realization of her loss, and her tears flowed freely now. "Oh, Tony," she sobbed, "you used to be a lawyer. Tell me what to do."

"I can't, honey, but when I know what to do I'll do it for you. In the first place, did your father give Uncle Charley a check for five thousand dollars when he bought that section?"

"No, Tony. My father distrusted banks. He gave Uncle Charley five thousand dollars in gold-dust. I remember the night they weighed it out, spoonful after spoonful, on Uncle Charley's funny little scales. Uncle Charley had to be nasty, of course. He insisted on using his own scales; he said he had a half a notion my father's scales were crooked. Of course he didn't mean it—"

"I understand, dear. He was just keeping up his reputation as the worst heller in these here mountings—the little old fox that nobody could trap . . . Well, I had hoped we might find a canceled check to prove the payment—corroborate your statement, you understand. Courts usually require corroborative evidence. However, we have one more ace up the sleeve of our kimono. Undoubtedly Uncle Charley had a lawyer draw up the deed and of course the very worst kind of jack-leg lawyer would have informed him that his signature to the deed must be acknowledged before a notary public. Who was the lawyer?"

"They didn't have a lawyer. The mining company's superintendent—the one Bob Mason killed—told them it was a simple thing to fill in the legal description of the property on a printed form of deed. He had one in his office and filled it in on his typewriter. He told them laughingly he would save them a lawyer's fee. However, he received his fee—a two-gallon demijohn of Uncle Charley's oldest and best!"

"And that important witness is dead. Well, we'll make another search for the deed, Monica, and if we cannot find it I'll sue Uncle Charley's estate for you and what with your testimony and the notary's record we'll make out a pretty good case. Perhaps we'll win."

"I haven't any money for lawsuits," Monica replied drearily. "Now that Uncle Charley has died intestate the Public Administrator will administer his estate, will he not?"

"Unless Uncle Charley's next of kin should apply for and be granted letters of administration."

"Uncle Charley had no next of kin."

Tony Garland loaded his pipe and smoked thoughtfully for several minutes. "Well, Monica, we have a bridge to cross, of course, but we'll cross it when we come to it. Meanwhile I'll think of something. Love laughs at locksmiths, you know."

"To be as poor and as alone in the world as I am, Tony; to have a hundred and fifty thousand dollars almost in my hands and then to have it withdrawn—that's terribly hard, Tony."



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"Oh, I'll get it back for you, dear. Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again."

Monica leaned her tired head on his broad young shoulder for a moment. "Oh, Tony," she murmured, "you're so masterful and comforting. I've never met a man like you before."

"Please God you never may," he replied, and she felt his lithe body shake with a little inward chuckle. In a moment, however, he was serious. "What will you do when you're a rich lady?" he queried.

Monica raised her head and looked at him wistfully. "My plans are very indefinite, Tony. That is another bridge we'll cross when we come to it."

"But how about the immense and contemptuous world—down yonder?"

She kissed him lightly on the cheek. "In the fanciful phraseology of the late Uncle Charley," she whispered in his ear, "to hell with that!"

"Oh, you're delicious!" he cried, and hugged her to him. "I love you so much my heart hurts. And it isn't pantry love either, honey. The hurt started the day before yesterday."

"A man in a kitchen is a pathetic figure, Tony. Do run out and milk the goat."

"I think I ought to wash Pansy's udder carefully and let the young fellow rustle for himself," he suggested, with the odd, whimsical leer she found so tremendously amusing. "He's bound to feel more at home. Romulus and Remus were suckled by a she-wolf, you know, and Pansy's a sweet and gentle little creature. I'm certain she will not object."

"You're bound to experiment, aren't you?"

With a light laugh he poured some hot water in a pan, helped himself to soap and a towel and departed for the barn, where presently Monica heard him singing a rollicking song of his soldier days.

"Oh, the dirty little adjutant's the worst one of them all

He has you on the parade-ground to answer every call,

And if you are not steady at dress parade or drill,

Oh, it's 'Sergeant, do your duty. Shove that rookie in the mill!'"

"He reminds me of a little overgrown boy," thought the girl happily. "He's so kind and thoughtful. I think he's a good man, too."

Had she been in a mood somewhat more philosophical she would have realized that men whose lives are lived as close to the earth as was Tony Garland's are, quite generally, simple, kind and wholly understanding creatures. It is the competition of civilized life that destroys the thing God made to His own image and likeness!

And Tony Garland, whimsical, humorous young rascal that he was, had his way with Pansy and the baby. He had the amiable Pansy in the living-room with her head tied short to the leg of the table, and the baby held under her, gleaning sustenance from nature's fount, before Monica knew what he was doing. He called to her to come and see.

"An ounce of invention is worth a ton of horse power," he assured her with that grave solemnity that denotes the humorous country dweller. "The maternal spirit is strong in Pansy. She ought to have a family of her own——" He commenced singing softly an improvised parody of "The Wearin' o' the Green."

"Oh, I once knew a nanny-goat and Pansy was her name,

She had no children of her own, which really was a shame,

But she met a brave young ranger and I'll tell you what he did,

He supplied her with a baby and she thought it was a kid."

"Second verse!" Monica demanded, childishly delighted at his magnificent nonsense.

"And when at last to manhood's state that goat-raised child attained



A blind man at a glance could see how badly he'd been trained  
For he'd eat tin cans and paper, all while wagging of his chin,  
And he didn't have a single friend, because he butted in!"

"Tony, you're a ridiculous boy!"  
"Since you do not appreciate my minstrelsy I'll not open my mouth again tonight."  
"Oh, please do, Tony! Sing me the third verse. Please."  
Garland resumed:

"Oh, he met a mountain-maiden and unto her he said,  
'I'd sure be delighted, miss, if me an' you could wed,'  
But the maiden turned a haughty face and said, 'Go home to mater,  
For I'll wed a forest-ranger! Thanks, I do not crave a satyr.'"

He had succeeded at last in driving the blue devils off Bogus. "And then what?" Monica pleaded childishly.

He heaved a deep sigh. "You're just like any little girl. Once a fellow starts to tell you a fairy-tale he's irrevocably lost. He must go on and on and on and on, ever such a long way, until the hero comes at last to a little hut in the forest where the magician lives. The magician opens the door, in response to our hero's timid knock, and immediately says 'Hocus, pocus, imporatus, abra cadabra,' which, liberally translated, means this child is fed and it is now time to milk Pansy and put her back in the barn. To the wood box with this infant!"

He placed the baby in Monica's arms and pranced into the kitchen for the large lard pail into which Pansy was wont to be milked. He came out whistling, the soft, mellow, warbling notes of a Spanish mocking-bird; while he milked Pansy he completed the mocking-bird's not inconsiderable repertoire, gave an imitation of a sleepy little thrush and the rich, burbling, joyous song of a meadow-lark.

"You're an accomplished little fellow, aren't you?" Monica twitted him. "There's real music in your whistling. You've taken lessons."

"I have—from birds."

"Will you teach me, Tony?"

"I will not!"

"Oh, Tony!"

"Your lips were not made for whistling."

"I suppose that's one of your pretty worldly speeches."

"Quien sabe?"

"Tony, I think you're awfully nice."

"Hush, woman! Don't make love to me. Pansy'll be scandalized! By the way, Monica—well, never mind." He broke off abruptly.

"Never mind what?" Monica demanded, with feminine curiosity and persistence.

"Nothing. Just a foolish thought."

"I must know what it is. I want to know all of your little foolish thoughts as well as your fine, noble ones."

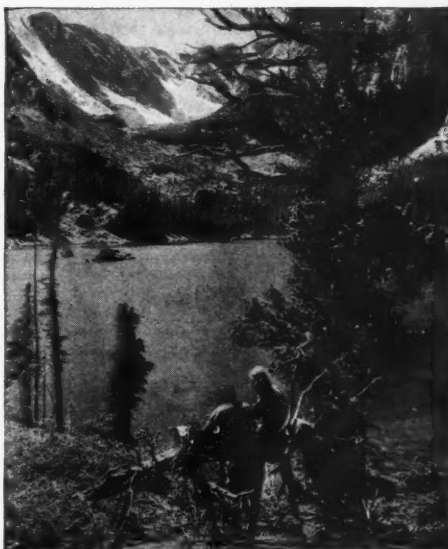
"Well—of course this is only a suggestion from a mere man—but it seems to me you can take one of those empty twenty-pound meal sacks I saw in your cupboard, cut a hole in each bottom corner for the baby's legs, a hole in each side near the top for his arms, put a draw string around the mouth of the sack, shove the child into the sack and draw it tight about his neck. You'd have him dressed in a jiffy."

"That's an excellent idea and I'll act on it immediately, Tony." She stood over him, beaming down at him with those great lambent brown eyes that thrilled him so; she seemed to be studying him. Presently she ruffled his black poll. "Just a play-boy," she murmured, apparently to herself. "Just a big baby play-boy!"

She tucked the infant into his improvised bed in the wood box and returned to the kitchen.

Garland spent that night stretched on the floor in front of the fireplace, rising from time

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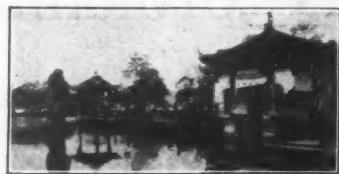
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to time to minister to Bob Mason. After luncheon next day he mounted his horse and rode over to Uncle Charley's late residence near Dogwood Flats. The deceased hells's two little speckled pack-mules were in a tiny corral back of a wretched little barn and by the eagerness with which they met Garland at the gate he realized they had been without food or water for forty-eight hours. When he had watered and fed them he took both in charge, placed the pack-saddles with the kyacks on them and rode over to the foot of the trail leading up to Bogus.

About five o'clock Sheriff Bentley came up the road through Tantrum Meadows and Garland was relieved to see a woman seated beside him in his car. Bentley introduced her as Mrs. King.

From the tonneau of Bentley's car the sheriff and Garland removed the groceries and sick-room supplies, stowing them in the kyacks. To the pack-saddles they bound the two cots, the bedding and blankets, and to the top of one of these loads the gallant sheriff swung the nurse.

"Set there comfortable and hang on to the pack-rope," he admonished her, "an' you'll git there yet. If you feel yourself slippin' call out to the ranger."

He waved them a debonair farewell and motored up the valley until he came to the trail leading up June-bug Creek. He followed this until he came to the main forest service road that led off to the west through the narrow mountain meadow in the center of which Bob Mason, Baldy and the baby had crouched in the water-hole while the fire raged around them. This road would lead him over the western foot-hills and down to Montague, the county-seat, by the shortest possible route. However, he was not in a time- or mile-saving mood this late afternoon. The mystery of the parentage of Bob Mason's baby was worrying him and for the purpose of unraveling this mystery he had chosen this route home.

Half-way up the hillside he found the skeleton of a motor-car in the spot Bob Mason had described to him, and pinned under the gaunt chassis a burned, baked, blackened thing that had once been a mother. The steel beam had crashed down through her torso to such a depth that the sheriff realized that she had been spared the horror of being extinguished slowly, by fire. On the license bracket the warped and blacked license plate still clung, but the letters and figures had been stamped into the metal and their outlines could be easily traced. The sheriff made a memorandum of them, then laboriously gathered wash boulders in the bed of the little stream below and piled them up and over the body in such a manner as to protect it from hungry coyotes until he could notify the coroner at Montague and have an inquest held on the scene of the accident, after which the body would be removed for burial.

It was late when he reached home. After dinner he went down to his office and searched through the list of motor licenses with which all chiefs of police and county sheriffs are furnished by the State Motor Vehicle Office. As these records came to his office from the state capital his chief clerk had compiled them in alphabetical and numerical order, and it was an easy matter to discover the name of the owner of that burned automobile.

The sheriff lighted his pipe and for a long time sat pondering his discovery. "Sort o' looks as if God A'mighty concluded to take a hand in Bob Mason's affairs," he soliloquized presently. "Well, I'd rather get a poke in the eye with a sharp stick than do the job I've got to do, but—it's just nacherly got to be done. So I'd better fly to it. Some more of the hell of my job as sheriff."

He walked down the street to a pretentious house standing in the midst of a spacious lawn, and rang the door-bell. A man came to the door and opened it.

"Evenin', Jim," said Bentley politely. "Got a few minutes to spare? There's a little matter I've got to talk over with you."

"Certainly. Come in, Zeke." He led him into the living-room. "What's on your mind?"

"Where's the missus, Jim?"

"Visiting her folks over at Alturas."

"When were you expectin' her back?"

"Well, I've been expecting her the past two days, but I reckon her folks decided to keep her with them a little longer. Why do you ask?"

Bentley ignored the query. "She had the baby with her, didn't she?"

"Yes. What of it? Has anything happened?"

"She drove over in your roadster?"

"Yes, yes, of course."

The sheriff put his big hand on the other's shoulder. "Jim, I'd rather be shot than tell you what I'm here to tell you, but you've got to be told. Jim, the little woman ain't a-comin' back to you." And then, with remarkable gentleness, he gave the details, while the other sat staring at him, saying no word, not even weeping. "The baby wasn't hurt," the sheriff went on rapidly, anxious to alleviate the terrible hurt he was inflicting. "A feller ridin' by a few minutes after the accident found the child had been rolled clear of the car, so he saved the youngster, and I'll bring him in to you tomorrow."

"Who—was—the—man?" The sheriff's auditor swallowed and spoke with difficulty. "I'm—beholden—to—him."

"Bob Mason. You remember you prosecuted him two years ago for killin' the superintendent of the Hercules Hydraulic Minin' Company? Well, he escaped from the convict road gang over in Del Norte County and as luck would have it—"

"Mason? The man I sent to San Quentin for life?"

"Yep-p-p! Same feller."

"Oh, my God, Zeke!"

"That's what I say. Reckon you might have talked to the jury different an' got him a better break if you'd have known the debt you was to be under to him later on. I always did figger you was a mite severe with Bob Mason in that case."

"Don't, Zeke. Don't torture me."

"I won't. You got enough without me addin' to it. . . . Well, I'll bring the baby in to you tomorrow night—no, don't ask me where the child is. I'll not tell you."

"And Mason! Have you recaptured him?"

"Not officially. . . . Reckon you'd prefer to be alone now, Jim, so if you'll excuse me I'll be moseyin' along. I wouldn't come out to the coroner's inquest if I was you. Stay in town and make arrangements for the funeral. You want to remember the wife as you see her last—understand? We'll place her in a coffin an' seal it. Good night, Jim. I'm most a'mighty sorry for you."

He stalked silently out of that stricken home and back to his own comfortable bungalow. About an hour after he came in he told his wife about it.

"I wish the poor devil could cry some," he complained. "That'd help!"

"The shallows murmur, but the deeps are dumb," his wife replied, and for the first time in many years the sheriff remembered she had been a school-teacher before he married her.

Led by Bentley, the coroner and his jury motored out next morning to the scene of the accident and held the inquest. And when they had started back for the county-seat with their gruesome burden the sheriff drove on through the San Dimas, parked his car at the foot of the Bogus trail and climbed laboriously to the lookout station. Monica met him in the yard.

"I've come for the baby," he announced with his customary directness. "It belongs to Jim Kerby. He's the district attorney of Montague, the man who prosecuted Bob Mason." He paused and looked down at her with something of the quizzicality of a St. Bernard dog. "Reckon he'll be the first to sign a petition for a pardon now; or I'd be ashamed of him if he didn't favor a petition for a new trial so we could lug in our hearsay



evidence so as to sway a sympathetic jury."

The girl sat down on the bench under the sugar-pine and stared at him. "Affairs move with such rapidity lately," she announced presently, "I have difficulty keeping up with them."

"Yes, an' they're goin' to move faster from now on, Monica. Where's that lawyer-ranger?"

"He left last night, after delivering the nurse."

"I reckoned he had. He's turned Uncle Charley's little mules loose in Tantrum Meadows to mingle with my Baldy horse. I seen 'em as I drove up."

"How is poor Baldy?"

"Well, he looked sort o' reproachful at me, settin' there in my automobile, an' he give a disgusted snort when I drove on past him, so I reckon he's beginnin' to take on his old interest in life. He's got too much sense to leave fresh water an' green feed, so I reckon I'll leave him there a week an' then come an' get him. How's our prisoner?"

"The nurse says he's fairly comfortable and will be up and around in a month, as well as ever."

When Anthony Garland departed from Bogus, after installing the trained nurse at the lookout station, the thought came to him that he was very much in need of a bed and about twenty-four hours of uninterrupted slumber. With the Tantrum Meadows station burned he faced the prospect of sleeping in the open, at ranger headquarters if he cared to ride some fifteen miles to get there, or in the alleged hotel over at Dogwood Flats.

"It's a toss-up between saddle-galls or bed-bugs," he declared, and spun a half-dollar. "Dogwood Flats it is—and if there's a flea or a bedbug in Dogwood that can awaken me once I get to sleep, it's a sure sign I'm in failing health."

It was past the dinner hour at the Dogwood Flats hotel when he reached there, and with the customary stupid indifference to the comfort of his guests, the proprietor declined to bestir himself in the matter of food. "The dinin'-room's closed," explained everything, so Garland betook himself to the general store of the Hercules Hydraulic Mining Company and invested in crackers, sardines and near-beer. While he was seated on a nail-keg eating, John Thurlow, the superintendent, came out of the mining company's office in the rear of the general store. At sight of the ranger he paused abruptly.

"Good evening, Ranger," he greeted Garland civilly. "I suppose you're pretty well tucked out after the events of the past three days."

"A houseless, homeless, hunted wretch, I wander through the world," Garland quoted. "Why doesn't the mining company erect a hotel and run that growling, disobliging Boniface off the earth? He wouldn't even consider setting some cold victuals before me."

Thurlow smiled. "If the company planned to operate here indefinitely we might consider your proposition, Ranger, if for no reason other than sympathy. All the ground we have will be washed up in about a year, however, and when we pull out of Dogwood Flats this settlement will soon be but a memory."

"A bitter memory, methinks."

"Somebody told me you were in here yesterday and bought some lumber for a coffin for Uncle Charley Canfield."

The ranger nodded and described briefly Uncle Charley's last day on earth. Thurlow listened carefully and had the good sense not to ask questions out of the commonplace.

"Did the old boy have any relatives?" he inquired sympathetically.

"None that anybody ever heard of. The only person left to mourn his passing is Miss Dale, the lookout up on Bogus. He was her uncle by choice, I imagine, owing to the fact that her father and Uncle Charley had been partners for about twenty years."

"Oh, the old man was Uncle Charley to everybody who knew him. He was that sort of man. Did he leave any estate to speak of?"

It was generally believed Uncle Charley had a few dollars in the bank of Montague. He cashed a check here occasionally."

Garland thought he knew how this bank-account had originated. It was, undoubtedly, founded on the five thousand dollars Ashforth Dale had paid for the section of land Thurlow had been negotiating with Uncle Charley to secure for his company. He decided, with his lawyer's instinct, to let Thurlow do some talking.

"Oh, I suppose the old chap managed to run into a little placer-gold from time to time," he replied lightly. "His needs were trifling. I understand, too, he made a very excellent brand of moonshine whisky and sold some of it locally."

"No, strange to say, he never sold a drop of it. Just gave it away to his particular friends. That's why the local authorities never bothered him. I wonder if the old man left a will."

Garland was instantly alert. Lawyer-like, he would volunteer no information which might, even remotely, prejudice his client's case. So he sparred. With his humorous grin he replied:

"Can you imagine Uncle Charley wanting anybody to administer an estate consisting of a pair of ancient little pack-mules, a couple of pack-saddles, some picks and shovels and a few odds and ends?"

"I'm not so certain he didn't have some money in bank," Thurlow insisted. "Somebody ought to search his cabin and seek for a will among his effects. That old man wasn't half the fool most people thought he was, and if he had some money in bank he would have made a will and left it to that Dale girl on Bogus Lookout."

Garland pondered this statement deeply. "Come to think of it, Mr. Thurlow, there is food for thought in your suggestion. What makes you think he would leave his estate to Monica Dale?"

"They tell me hereabouts that Uncle Charley worshiped her. Used to call her his little gal and brag how his old partner, Ash Dale, left her in his charge. It is reasonable to suppose she would be his heir."

"Well, of course, he owned that section of land to the north of Honey Valley, but it's worthless, although Miss Dale's father always believed it was auriferous."

Thurlow gave him a straight look. "Are you certain Uncle Charley didn't make a will?" he queried again.

Garland's glance met his, held it. His high eyebrow was eloquently interrogative.

"Because if he didn't," Thurlow went on, apparently answering Garland's unspoken query as to his interest in the matter, "it'll be a shame."

"You mean, if he didn't make a will and leave his entire estate to Monica Dale?"

Thurlow nodded. "I have seen Miss Dale but twice, but she impressed me as a very superior sort of girl to have been raised in these backwoods. To me she's somewhat of a tragic figure. I often think of her in her lonely, ill-paid job up on Bogus—she's been down here twice since I took over this job, to purchase supplies—and the second time I saw her here I introduced myself. An interesting personality. I hoped she'd invite me up—but she didn't and I understood why and liked her for it. She'd been safe enough, but—damnation, I hope that old man left a will naming her as his sole legatee."

"Unfortunately, Uncle Charley's death was very sudden. Of course he had told Miss Dale earlier in the day of your offer to him of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, plus his income tax, for that hill section. In fact, he told her that as soon as he received your check he was going to indorse it to her."

Thurlow's grimace was almost painful. "Yes, I offered Uncle Charley that because he was Uncle Charley," he admitted. "He had one leg in the grave and no relatives to leave the money to, so I decided to try him out on an offer that would mean a vast fortune to him. However, if that Miss Dale should file a

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will for probate and be named in that will as his sole legatee, I'll see to it that she receives considerably more for that section than I offered Uncle Charley."

"What has induced this philanthropic state of mind, Mr. Thurlow?"

"That fire yesterday. A business deal is a business deal and we're all out to make as much as we can—as much as the other fellow will let us get away with. But I didn't know about Miss Dale then—how close she was to Uncle Charley. I've been talking to some of the Dogwood Flats citizens since Uncle Charley died and—well, when that fire was raging up the west slope of Bogus while another fire raged across the eastern slope and kept me from riding up there to save her, provided she needed saving, I— Well, Ranger, I got to thinking more and more what a tragic, helpless girl she is. I thought how fine it would be if she could only escape from these hills and all day long I've been wondering if Uncle Charley made a will when he discovered he wasn't going to have time to sign a deed. I figured, of course, that the reason he went up on Bogus was to tell her all about my offer, and to make plans for her future when the money should have been collected—poor old duffer. I don't think he had a very happy death."

Tony Garland looked at John Thurlow with new interest. "How long is it since you introduced yourself to Miss Dale?" he demanded.

"About two months ago."

Garland's quizzical little smile robbed his next sentence of the least tincture of impertinence. "You've been a trifle bashful or dilatory or hesitant, haven't you, Mr. Thurlow?"

"I see what you're driving at, Ranger. You're a man of considerable penetration. However, I figured I'd turn this Uncle Charley deal before commencing my visits to Bogus. I had a little money but not enough—and I didn't want to court that girl until I could— I wonder why the devil I'm confiding all this to you."

"Never mind why. You wanted to close this Uncle Charley deal so you could play the prince to Cinderella. Wasn't that the way of it?"

Thurlow nodded, embarrassed a little.

"You're a mighty decent chap, Thurlow, and on Miss Dale's behalf I thank you for your chivalrous attitude. And I'm almost sorry you've lost. You have lost, you know. You'll have to forget your dreams because I'm the fair-haired boy on Bogus."

Thurlow studied his boot-tips a minute. "Got the inside track on me, eh?"

"Yes, but the information is confidential."

"I think you're much too lucky for a forest-ranger."

"I am. And she's out of luck. I thought I ought to tell you now before you begin dreaming more dreams."

"Thanks."

"Now that we've settled that issue," Garland resumed, "are you still willing to play the prince to Cinderella, if opportunity offers?"

"I'd do anything in reason to make that girl happy. I think I'd lend you money, if I had it, to marry her and take her away from Bogus. I've heard all about her. She wants to escape. She's hobbled—caged. She's breaking her poor heart against these eternal hills."

"You're very kind and very—splendid," Garland said. "I want to be your friend. Won't you shake hands with me on that?"

They shook hands—Garland enthusiastically, Thurlow gravely.

"When I trust a man I trust him all the way," Garland continued. "I'm going to trust you. Read that," and he handed Thurlow Uncle Charley Canfield's last will and testament, unsigned.

"It isn't signed," Thurlow reminded him.

"Uncle Charley died before I could get him to make his mark."

"Were there witnesses present?"

"Two men. I wrote that document for him."

"None but the brave deserve the fair," Thurlow assured him. He spread the paper on the counter and with a pencil made a shaky little cross where the signature should have been. There was no humor in his eyes when he handed the paper back to Garland. "That's Uncle Charley Canfield's will, Mr. Ranger," he announced, "and if you love Monica Dale you'll file it for probate immediately—provided, of course, you can induce the witnesses to sign as such. How about those two men? Are they human beings?"

"I think they are."

"When you get their signatures as witnesses on that document you'll be certain of it, my friend. Now, listen to me. The Hercules Hydraulic Mining Company wants that property, and a man as smart as you appear to be should realize that when the superintendent of the Hercules Hydraulic Mining Company tells you that and offers to suborn a forgery, it is obvious that he stands between his love and duty. Unless you file that alleged will, Jethroe, the president of this company and my superior officer, will see to it that the Public Administrator files an application for letters of administration on Uncle Charley's estate. That land will be appraised at about five dollars an acre, perhaps less, and with the court's sanction Jethroe will buy it himself from the estate and resell it for about half a million dollars, perhaps more, to the Hercules Hydraulic Mining Company. If you file that alleged will, however, nobody will contest it and when the property comes into Miss Dale's possession, as Uncle Charley desired it to, Jethroe will buy it from her—but at a price I shall set."

"I said that when I made up my mind to trust a man I trusted him all the way. I must withdraw that remark in so much as it applies to you. I may not trust you. You are on Jethroe's pay-roll and you must not double-cross him. If you'd do that to him you'd do it to me. I am a lawyer by profession and I know enough of the law to obey it. That is not Uncle Charley's will and I cannot go into court with clean hands and petition for letters of administration on his estate."

"Think it over, my friend," Thurlow urged, and without the formality of saying good night he went back to his office.

Garland finished his belated meal and dragged his tired body to the certain discomfort of a knotty bed in the Dogwood Flats hotel. As he sat on the edge of the bed, thoughtfully rubbing his toes before retiring, he told himself that he liked John Thurlow.

"He suggested that I should do something crooked, dog-gone him," Garland soliloquized, "and yet, for all that, I can't help thinking he's an honest, decent gentleman. Monica would like him tremendously. Judas priest, I'm glad I didn't have any tremendous business deal on when I met Monica Dale! I wonder how the devil it happened. I know a girl two days—and two minutes after I first meet her I'm cursing my poverty because it bars me from asking her to marry me—and then, without exerting the least effort, we find we're sweethearts and loving each other as dearly as if we'd been sweethearts in school . . ."

"Of course Bob will sign as a witness to that will, but the sheriff may not. He takes his legal duties seriously. Oh, damn this legal hair-splitting! That and not a sane interpretation of the law is the curse of the profession I have abandoned—and now I've been pitchforked back into it. Lord, I'm tired! If the sheriff will only see this thing in a sensible light—"

He got into bed and drew the covers up around him. "I'll make a most exhaustive search for that lost deed," he thought drowsily, "and then, if we can't find it— Yes, I like that man, Thurlow. He's a quick thinker . . ."

*John Thurlow takes up the cudgels in Monica's behalf, and Tony Garland plans to enlist Thurlow in his fight for Bob Mason's freedom and Monica's inheritance—in Peter B. Kyne's August instalment*

## An Orphan Asylum

(Continued from page 75)

common sense is developed, but it is a girl's own business whether her winter outfit is blue, brown or purple. Mr. Carson placed only one restriction on the matter of clothes, and that was that no two girls should dress alike. Good psychology, that.

As the Carson girls grow older their incomes increase, and by the time they reach the seventh and eighth grades—that is, by the time they are thirteen or fourteen—they are required to make their entire budgets themselves. They keep account of every penny they spend, and they learn the advantage of saving up to buy things they want in future instead of the things they imagine they want at the moment. The "personal finance" conferences, under a teacher especially fitted for the task, is one of the most important features of school work for the older students.

All Carson girls know that they must be ready for self-support at eighteen. Long before that they have had a great deal of vocational training. They have handled tools in a carpenter shop, they have worked in the school printing shop, they have taken their turns in the library, the school office and the infirmary. Almost every girl knows how to use a typewriter, to file papers and to keep books. At sixteen or thereabouts they begin to know, or at least to guess, what form of wage-earning they are naturally fitted for. They take part-time jobs out of school, and when the time comes to use their incomes to get definite training in special work, they enter training schools, all the time living in the home cottages.

In 1925 one of the Carson girls was attending a normal school for teachers; another was in a day-nursery with a view of becoming a trained nurse. Another girl was learning to be a hair-dresser. A Carson student was serving an apprenticeship in a big Philadelphia department store, and another in a smart millinery shop. One senior was in a business college, one in the Drexel Institute, one in a school of industrial art, three in the Philadelphia Trades School for Girls.

Not one of these girls has been spoiled for women's traditional job of home-making. For years they have been at home-making, not in laboratories but in real kitchens and real laundries and sewing-rooms. They have learned something about gardening and poultry raising. They have even learned something about babies, for Carson social training extends to helping village mothers. Most important of all, they have been taught to think intelligently, to be self-dependent, and to face a world in which every human being sinks or swims, survives or perishes about as he deserves.

It would have been easier for the Carson College teachers if they could have had their choice of students, girls of good heredity, superior minds. But they had to take them from institutions, from broken-up homes, from adopted parents who did not particularly want them. Every girl had a more or less tragic background to get rid of. Some of them, for the first few years at Carson, were difficult specimens. But in seven years of experiment only two girls were sent away, and those two proved of such low mental caliber that institutional care was absolutely demanded.

My daughter would have entered life without any handicap. Her ancestors on both sides would have been Americans with traditions of good homes and rather superior education. Could I have given her as good an upbringing as a Carson College orphan? In my soberest moments I am sometimes glad I didn't have to try. My own life has been too far from that of a normal wife and mother. Yet I know that what can be done with a girl in an orphan asylum can be done with girls in American homes, and I know that we aren't going to have a next generation of really fine and efficient women unless it is done.

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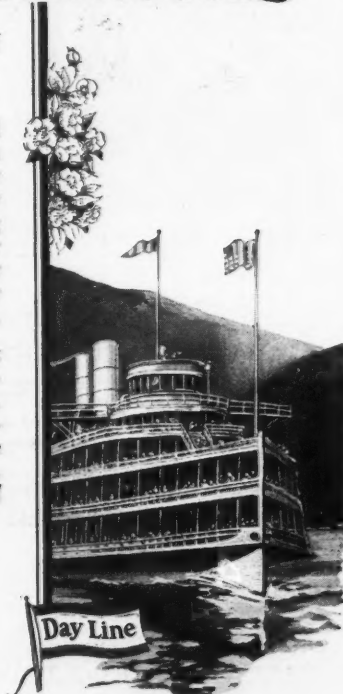
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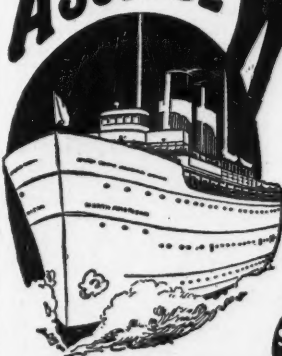
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